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Issue No 82

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POP GOES RED LIST LIVE

The plug has been pulled on this year's Red List Live three-day music festival at Port Lympne.

Due to be held on June 19-21 and featuring the likes of The Wombats (pictured), The Zutons, Vic Reeves, The Wedding Present and The Damned, organisers blamed the recession and competition from other Kent events for the decision. It has vowed, however, to still stage shows featuring the artists across the county and London. And it says it will be back for 2010.

Latest on the Create Festival - SEE PAGE 3. More on Red List Live - SEE PAGE 16.

BY GARETH ARNOLD

PICTURESQUE Chilham will provide the set for the BBC's latest costume drama; a four-part serialisation of Jane Austen's *Emma*.

Popular with location directors looking for a picture-perfect English village, Chilham will stand in for the fictional village of Highbury in Surrey, the setting of Austen's romantic comedy tale of matchmaking gone awry.

The large scale production, the latest in a series of popular period dramas commissioned by the BBC, will feature veteran actor Michael Gambon as Emma's neurotic father, and *Trainspotting* star Johnny Lee Miller as Emma's friend Mr Knightley.

The title role will be taken by Romola Garai, star of *Atonement* and *Daniel Deronda*, and the production also features *Green Wing* star Tamsin Greig.

The four-day shoot starts in Chilham next week, when a BBC film crew will transform several streets, the churchyard and the central square into a 19th century village.

A fountain will be constructed in the centre of the square, while roads including Taylor Hill, Church Hill and The Street will be laid with a gravel covering to hide the street markings, with vehicles removed from the area.

Parish councillor Yvonne White said: "It's very exciting. Chilham is quite often used for filming. Four years ago we had the *Agatha Christie* team filming here for an episode of *Poirot*, featuring Kelly Brook, so people are used to a bit of inconvenience.

"But the BBC crews are very good. Generally

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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TOP TV CLIPS



1 Kent Life has opened its doors for 2009 promising a full family day out. **Search 'family'**



2 Discovering the crypt in St Peter's Church, Sandwich; one of the county's best kept secrets to visit. **Search 'crypt'**



3 Members of The Royal Sussex living history regiment at Folkestone's Shorncliffe Barracks. **Search 'history'**

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CIVIC LEADER: Ashford council chief executive David Hill (inset) is leaving in July

What price our borough's next chief executive?

COUNCIL bosses are refusing to confirm the salary the borough's next chief executive can expect as the search begins to find a replacement for David Hill.

Mr Hill announced last week he would be departing in July to take up a similar post in Milton Keynes.

As the person responsible for the day-to-day running of council services, the position is hugely important to a rapidly-growing town and likely to attract a six-figure salary.

According to 'Taxpayers' Alliance figures, Mr Hill earned £117,015 in 2007-08.

The question now is whether that will be increased to lure a candidate of the right calibre, or reduced in the light of the recession and belt tightening by the council.

In Swale – an area which covers Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey – a chief executive appointed last month will pocket

■ BY ED HILL

£130,000, plus bonuses.

But Ashford council has not yet clarified its position on the salary or started looking for a replacement. It would not be unusual for the council to employ an outside agency to identify suitable candidates.

Cllr Paul Clokie, leader of the council, said: "I will be working with senior colleagues to put in place future management arrangements for the council."

The town has seen many changes during the seven years Mr Hill has been at the helm, including the redesign of the ring road and town centre streets, the extension to County Square and improvements to the Stour Centre.

He has helped manage the plans for the borough, which has been targeted as a Government growth area, including the creation of the PFI agreement leading to the regeneration of the Stanhope estate.

'Everyone enjoys the TV cameras'

FROM FRONT PAGE

they compensate people for their trouble and are very accommodating and try not to disrupt village life too much. Everyone enjoys it really.

"The square is going to be closed to traffic because obviously it has to represent a picture-perfect period village."

First published in December 1815, Emma follows the fortunes of the eponymous heroine as she attempts to set up her friends in love matches that don't always go to plan.

The novel has been adapted by award-winning writer Sandy Welch, who is responsible for a string of BBC hits including *Our Mutual Friend*, *Jane Eyre*, and *North And South*.

This production will be the first time Emma has been screened as a serialisation since the 1970s.

The novel's last screen outings were both in 1996 when ITV made a single-episode drama, starring Kate Beckinsale and Mark Strong, while Gwyneth Paltrow starred as Emma in an Oscar-nominated film version by Miramax the same year.

Kids on the catwalk

VOLUNTEERS from a children's hospice will be gracing the catwalk at the Designer Outlet this Saturday and Sunday as part of its style weekend.

Demelza, which provides hospice care for youngsters with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions, will be providing eight models for the spring and summer collections.

Volunteers will also be selling charity doughnuts during the two days as well as collecting money for the hospice. The show will be in the food court at noon and 3pm on both days.

Safety days advice

TWO community safety days will be held in Ashford on Wednesday and Thursday, April 15 and 16.

Police will be joined by Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Neighbourhood Watch and Trading Standards, all of whom will be giving advice about dealing with bogus officials and rogue traders. They will also be providing property marking for a small charge.

The first takes place on Wednesday at the Swan Centre in Newtown, between 11am and 2pm.

On the following day the teams will be at Christ Church Youth and Community Centre, Stanhope Road, from 1pm to 5pm.

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Creating event for music's biggest acts

PLANS to transform the Create Festival into a paid-for event capable of hosting some of music's top names have taken a big step forward.

As exclusively revealed in Yourashford, the plans were put in place after borough council chiefs confirmed they would be cutting funding to the free summer event in Victoria Park after this year.

It left the festival facing possible collapse. But in the week organisers of the Red List Live Festival pulled the plug on this year's three-day event at Port Lympne – due to have hosted the likes of the Zutons, Wedding Present, the Undertones and the Wombats – the Create Festival looks set to go from strength to strength.

Ashford council arts officer Chris Dixon said: "Because of the uncertainty about the festival's future we have had a lot of people and businesses come forward asking how they can help."

The council blamed the economic climate for the decision, but it has left the door open for a return of the festival in a different form.

Mr Dixon said: "We have got together a steering group that can advise the council on the best way forward for the festival."

■ BY ED HILL

"In a way we are starting to out-grow the room we have at Victoria Park and if we are going to have an even bigger and better event we will have to look elsewhere."

"We want to be in a situation where we can attract some of the best acts in the UK."

Josh Heyburn is a young music promoter who runs Intimacy Gigs. He has joined this year's team involved in the festival.

He said: "We want to recreate the festival and perhaps charge a small amount of money and get more sponsorship deals agreed."

This year's headliners include Nick Harrison, a talented singer-songwriter who has been described as "a cross between the Arctic Monkeys and the Police", and tribute act Counterfeit Quo.

It is hoped about 5,000 people will attend the Create Festival 2009 on July 26 between 2-8pm.

Acts wanting to get involved in this year's festival should go to www.ashfordpresents.co.uk.



CREATING A NOISE: The festival team are drumming up support for new-look venture

'Sports village is back on agenda'

ASHFORD Town FC will live to fight another day – and don't give up yet on plans for its multi-million-pound sports village.

That's the boast from chairman Don Crosbie this week, who revealed to Yourashford the club was not – as he hinted in a statement on the club's website – facing financial meltdown.

He raised the fears after falling out with joint owner Tony Betteridge and revealing the club has an unpaid £50,000 tax bill. But now the pair have agreed a deal whereby Mr Crosbie will buy out his partner's holdings in the club.

And he says he remains determined to build the sports village, despite the economic downturn.

He said: "My position has not changed – the sports village is back on track."

• For more details, see Sport, pages 70-71.

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Listen to Andrew Neil at Kent 2020 Vision. Search '2020'

Here comes the bridal superstore

A BRIDAL superstore is to open in Wellesley Road, bringing jobs and one of the biggest outlets of its kind to the town.

Brides UK will open the 3,800 sq ft store on July 1 at the ring road site, creating 18 jobs and promising a further five once opened.

The store will be a one-stop shop for those looking to tie the knot. It is being created by Anthony Keates, 49, from Brides of Portsmouth, who intends to open a string of bridal megastores across the UK, with Ashford being the first.

He said: "We differ from other bridal companies in that we have a large stock, and we have photographers, cake-makers, florists and cars. Business is up 36 per cent on last year."

Mr Keates is certain Ashford is the ideal place to open the branch, which will be part of a new national brand.

He said: "Ashford is an area with a large and expanding population of young people. Ashford is ready for us – and we are ready for it."

The company has stores earmarked for Manchester, Newcastle, Birmingham and West Sussex.

County Square invites us all to birthday bash

COUNTY Square chiefs have lined up a host of special attractions and events as the mall invites shoppers to join in celebrations to mark its first anniversary.

The centre unveiled its multi-million-pound extension in April 2008, which also saw the opening of the Debenhams department store.

Since then it has gone from strength to strength and helped the town fight off the worst impact of the tough trading conditions.

Any gloom will be swept away on April 25, when County Square invites shoppers to tackle a tightrope or try their hand at a spot of ballroom dancing.

It forms just part of a day-long series of events to mark its birthday.

Among the attractions will be a workshop by the Kent Circus School, from noon to 3pm.

There will be a chance to juggle, toss diabolos and stilt-walk or simply be entertained by the school's performers.

Another group signed up for the celebrations is the Fit To Dance Centre, who will perform from 11am to 3pm.

Shoppers will also get the opportunity to join in with salsa and ballroom dance routines in the mall.

The Hawkinge Flyers pom-pom team will be kicking up a storm between 3pm and 4pm, and stilt-walkers will greet and guide visitors to the shops.

Music will be provided by the Big Fish Band, and the Ashford Sea Cadets.

There will also be giveaways and food samples throughout the day.

For more details, go to www.countysquareshoppingcentre.com

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Stanhope regeneration is up for UK housing award

THE redevelopment of Stanhope has been shortlisted for the Housing Heroes Award.

It is one of six finalists chosen from 300 entries across the UK that entered the competition. The awards are organised by Inside Housing magazine and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

The Moat Housing Association involved with the project has been nominated for the 'regeneration team of the year' award.

The winners will be announced in June.

MS sufferers invited to join monthly get-together

THE Multiple Sclerosis Society is holding informal monthly meetings at Godinton House.

Organisers say it will give those affected by MS a chance to have a chat and a cup of tea, collect the latest information and meet with others living with the condition.

The next meeting is on April 30 and the two-hour get-together starts at 10.30am.

To find out more call Janet White on 0208 438 0864.

New online directory to give local groups a voice

THE council has launched a new website for local clubs and organisations to promote their activities to the public.

The directory is aimed at not-for-profit groups such as arts and sports groups and replaces the former GoAshford site.

The council says it will be an invaluable resource where residents can find out what's going on in their community. For details visit www.ashford.gov.uk/group-sandclubsdirectory.

Wye youngsters given a chance to air their views

YOUNGSTERS in Wye are set to get a chance to share their opinions on facilities in the village.

It comes amid plans to relaunch the Wye Youth Forum to give young people the chance to have their say on how locals funds are spent.

The forums will be held at the Wye Methodist Hall. Contact Kent Council Council community warden Nick Thistle on 07969 583920.

Brain clinic to become one of UK's finest

■ BY ED HILL

HOTHFIELD Manor is set to become one of the foremost brain specialist clinics in the UK as it undergoes a £5 million investment programme.

The site is already home to the Hothfield Manor Acquired Brain Injury Centre, specialising in residential care for those recovering from serious head injuries.

Now work is under way for an extension to house a hydrotherapy pool, a state-of-the-art physiotherapy and occupational suite, consulting rooms and two self-contained flats to promote independent living.

The manor house is run by Huntercombe, a private healthcare provider that specialises in people dealing with mental health problems, acquired brain injury and neurodisabilities, learning disabilities and children with special needs.

And with the recent tragic death of actress Natasha Richardson still fresh in the memory, it once again underlines how vital brain injury treatment services are.

Keith Hutchinson, manager of the centre,

said: "The new extension will allow us to provide thorough care for people with severe head injuries, building on our reputation for treating particularly serious neurological trauma.

"The facilities provided by the new build will allow us to help more people who have been through life-threatening incidents to return to a normal life with a greater degree of independence."

Transition

Patients who arrive at the centre have usually been through an intensive rehabilitation programme prior to their admission to Hothfield.

They are referred to the centre by a care manager and spend time at the manor house and nearby bungalows before they make the transition back to everyday life. Some clients can stay for as long as two years.

The centre currently employs 30 staff as well as working with visiting brain injury specialists. The new unit will be staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of nurses and therapists.



BEGINNING: Work is now under way at adding to the facilities of the specialist brain injury clinic in Hothfield

Spokesman Marcus Van Hagen said: "Doing therapy in an environment akin to a home is so much better than a hospital ward.

"The pool adds another dimension to treatment. Physical exercise helps people with brain injuries to recover."

The site of the manor house can trace its roots back to Tudor times and the old building was commandeered by the Army during the Second World War.

The existing house was built by Sir Reginald Rootes back in 1954. It then became a nursing home in the 1980s and was reopened as a brain specialist unit in the late 1990s.

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Stadium funding still unclear

ALTHOUGH the Julie Rose Stadium has been saved from closure by the council taking over the lease, long-term funding issues still cloud its future.

Although council chiefs were remaining tight-lipped this week over the cost to the taxpayer of taking over the facility – especially in the light of the council apparently wanting to reduce its commitment to the venue as a result of budget cuts – there remain some key challenges.

Among them a fear it could face a tax bill of an estimated £80,000 if the venue's management was to lose its charitable trust status.

It now looks likely to bring the stadium under

the umbrella of the Ashford Leisure Trust (ALT) which runs the Stour Centre and Tenterden leisure centres. The ALT was running the day-to-day management of the stadium before the crisis over funding came about.

Chairman of the council's overview and scrutiny committee Robert Davidson said: "The ALT which is running the stadium has already had to make cuts to its services because of falling revenue and yet the same body is now expected to be able to manage all of them."

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Picture: ED HILL

THROUGH THE YEARS: Museum curator Alan Terry with just some of the collection covering Ashford Town FC

Town's ups and downs through history revealed

THE roller-coaster history of Ashford Town Football Club has kicked off in a new exhibition taking place at the town's museum.

As the club struggles against its latest problems of a huge unpaid tax bill and a fall-out between its two owners, Ashford Museum casts an eye back over the club's past.

Among the exhibits are old team photographs, programmes and extracts of some of its FA Cup exploits in the 1990s, taken from the acclaimed former fanzine, After Arter.

Curator of the museum, Alan Terry, said: "Young people today may think that Ashford Town is just a small, non-league club that has never achieved very much; but we have had some glory days in the past."

Pioneers

Football in Ashford dates back to the 1870s when it appears that football was being played under what are described as 'rugby rules'. The first proper football club that was organised went under the name of the South East Rangers in 1884.

It seems then, as now, the fortunes of the club seemed to rise and fall with the money available to sustain the team.

By 1903 the club, now called Ashford United, had dwindling crowds and large

■ BY ED HILL

debts leading to its downfall.

By 1928, football fans who wanted to support a local team were just left with players from the old railway works.

Ashford Town as we know it today finally formed in 1930, and played at Essella Park in Willesborough until 1987, when it moved to its current ground at the Homelands in Kingsnorth.

Also featured in an exhibition at the museum is another element of local history that not many people may know about near Sellindge.

Diners at the Airport Cafe on the A20 may wonder how it got its name, but the new exhibition goes a long way to explaining it.

Between 1968-1974 the industrial site opposite the diner was Ashford's airport. At its height 300,000 passengers used the terminal mainly flying to destinations in Europe.

However, aviation in the area actually dates back as far as 1916, and it was the taking-off point for early flying pioneers such as Amy Johnson.

Ashford Museum is next to the tourist information centre in The Churchyard, next to St Mary's in the town centre. It is open Mondays to Saturdays from 10am-1pm between April and October.

• Email yourashford@kosmedia.co.uk

Relive days of glory with Ashford Town

IT was just 15 years ago that Ashford Town embarked on a remarkable run of FA Cup journeys that would pit them against top opposition.

In 1994 they faced Fulham. In front of Sky cameras they held the club to a 2-2 draw.

The reply at Craven Cottage saw them draw 3-3 before losing 5-3 in extra time.

The following season they reached the second round of the competition and faced Watford. Nil-nil at half-time they finally lost 5-0.

See an interview with the museum creator about the exhibitions - search 'Ashford'.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Spreading cost of rates

THE council is urging businesses to take advantage of a new government scheme to allow them to pay their rates over a three-year period.

The new rules are expected to be in place by the end of July and will mean businesses will have the option of deferring 60 per cent of the planned rate increase for 2009-10 until 2010-11 and 2011-12.

The council says it will be writing to businesses in the next few weeks with more information about the scheme.

Details of the payment options are likely to be in the summer, once the new regulations are in place.

Businesses have been told they must continue to pay rates for 2009-10 until the scheme is in place and new bills are issued.

A copy of the Government fact sheet is available from the council by visiting www.ashford.gov.uk/businessrates.

Play-days offer for young

A SCHEME to inject a healthy dose of play and fun into the lives of the under-16s returns today.

The Ashford Go4Play scheme is a series of free, fully inclusive two-hour play sessions for children and young people who do not normally have access to these kind of services.

Launched last year by the Kent Children's Fund Network (KCFN) on behalf of Ashford council, this year's theme is about natural play, with a total of 12 play-days in woodland areas across the borough from April to August, culminating in the Family Play Festival at the Singleton Environment Centre on August 5.

Regular updates and information on all of the play-days will be available at www.kcfn.co.uk.

A baby boom at zoo park

PORT Lympne Wild Animal Park is celebrating an abundance of new baby monkeys.

In the past two months the park has seen the birth of two Javan langurs, two colobus monkeys, a howler and a de brazza monkey which is being hand-reared by head of primate section, Simon Jeffery (pictured).



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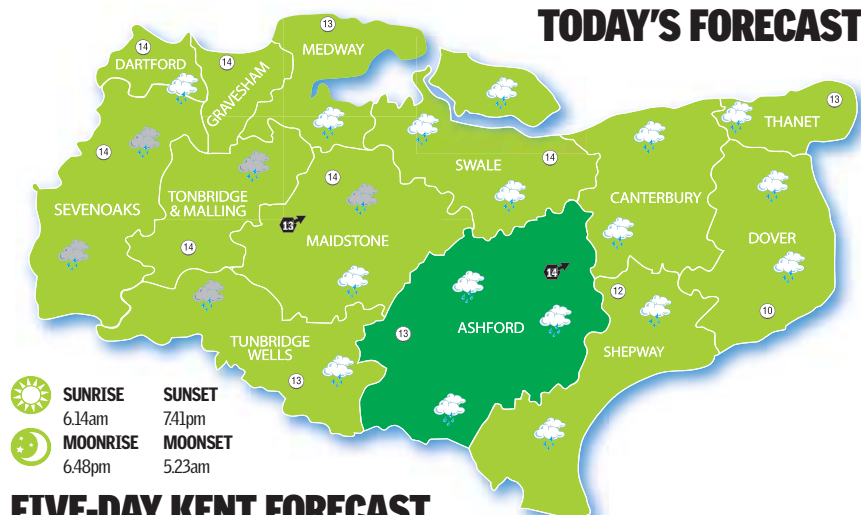
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	Sunday	3:21pm	6.0m
Dover	Saturday	1:03pm	6.5m
	Sunday	1:37pm	6.5m
Dungeness	Saturday	1:02pm	7.7m
	Sunday	1:36pm	7.5m
Ramsgate	Saturday	1:33pm	5.0m
	Sunday	2:07pm	4.9m
Sheerness	Saturday	2:38pm	5.8m
	Sunday	3:11pm	5.7m
Whitstable	Saturday	2:54pm	5.2m
	Sunday	3:25pm	5.1m

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	13°C	13°C	13°C	13°C	12°C	Gravesend	13°C	14°C	13°C	13°C	13°C
Canterbury	12°C	12°C	14°C	12°C	12°C	Maidstone	13°C	13°C	14°C	13°C	13°C
Chatham	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	11°C	Ramsgate	12°C	12°C	14°C	12°C	12°C
Dartford	13°C	14°C	13°C	13°C	13°C	Rochester	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	11°C
Dover	10°C	11°C	12°C	11°C	11°C	Sevenoaks	11°C	12°C	12°C	11°C	11°C
Faversham	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	11°C	Sittingbourne	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	11°C
Folkestone	10°C	11°C	12°C	11°C	11°C	Tonbridge	13°C	13°C	13°C	12°C	12°C
Gillingham	12°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	11°C	Tun Wells	13°C	13°C	13°C	12°C	12°C



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	16°C	Madrid	22°C
Athens	11°C	New York	14°C
Barcelona	16°C	Paris	19°C
Beijing	26°C	Rome	17°C
Bombay	36°C	Sydney	19°C
Cape Town	21°C	Tenerife	22°C
Cardiff	11°C	Tokyo	18°C
Gibraltar	17°C	Vancouver	12°C
Hong Kong	19°C	Warsaw	14°C
Las Palmas	22°C	Wellington	18°C

Kent on Saturday proves more news is good news

KENT ON SATURDAY

KOS Media is proud to announce the addition of Kent on Saturday to its award-winning series of newspapers.

Incorporating all the best aspects of our existing Kentish Saturday Observer, this exciting new publication will cover all the biggest news and sports stories of the week and reach more readers than ever before.

At a time when other local newspaper groups are being forced to cut back on staff and resources, the birth of Kent on Saturday demonstrates that KOS Media, the publisher of this paper, is still thriving despite the economic climate.

Managing director Paul Stannard said: "This is another exciting development for us at KOS Media following the launch of our two new YourLocal papers in Deal and Sandwich last month, which demonstrates our commitment to delivering hard-hitting news throughout the county."

Delivery

"Kent on Saturday will sit as an equal to our award-winning Kent on Sunday publication and act as the perfect start to the weekend."

Readers will be able to get their hands on a copy of the free paper from next weekend, with the number of available copies being significantly higher than was offered by the Kentish Saturday Observer.

Kent on Saturday will be available from all good newsagents and retail outlets from this Saturday. Alternatively, you can go green by reading it free on screen at www.kentnews.co.uk.

Meanwhile, KOS Media is running a new promotion to offer free delivery of its weekend papers to selected homes. To find out more visit www.kentnews.co.uk/free.

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yourlocalinterview

QUESTION & ANSWER

GILL HOWARD



Q How did you first get involved with the club?

A Most unusually, through my son who started playing for them from the age of ten. A person at the club called John Oliver has always helped all the youngsters who have shown an interest in playing bowls, mainly through grandparents. I decided that, rather than just keep watching, I would have some lessons and joined the club about eight years ago.

Q This year it is celebrating its 100th birthday. Can you tell me a bit about the history?

A It was started by a group of Ashford businessmen on December 1, 1908, and the first playing season was in summer 1909. It was fashionable in those days to belong to a sports club, and it attracted 250 men to pay an annual subscription of five shillings (25p). Part of the club house is an old Southern Railway carriage bought for 50 shillings (£2.50). We have all the minutes of meetings for 100 years so I have written a commemorative booklet that we are selling for £2.

Q How long have you been connected with the Ashford area? What do you think of the town?

A We moved from Hackney in 1989 as my company offered me a promotion to a job in Dover, and part of the deal was to live within 25 miles of the workplace. As my husband still worked in London, and our son was young, we

chose Ashford as an easy place to commute from, and seemed to offer good education and work opportunities as a future growth area. We have always found the town and surrounding countryside very pleasant, and are excited by its future developments.

Q What would you say to someone who is thinking of taking up bowls?

A Just come and have a go. It really is a sport for everybody.

Q The game has a certain image of being for older people is this fair?

A I think Julian Clary once described bowls clubs as youth clubs for the oldies! He's right as bowls is both a sport and a great social club for people. However, it's not just for 'oldies', as anybody can take part that is keen to test their hand and eye co-ordination, and play at the level they find comfortable. You can just play for fun, or play in leagues or county level. Also, it is finally changing in respect of dress code. We play in coloured shirts now, and have brightly coloured woods which helps to attract the younger people.

Q What are the differences between the indoor and outdoor game. Which do you prefer?

A My preference is the outdoor game, as I love playing on a nice sunny day. There is a place for both, as although the indoor game is potentially more precise, you are still facing

the opposition's skill and experience which you must assess and counter with your own and your team's abilities. Additionally, the outdoor game can have a bit more unpredictability as the elements are a factor.

Q The club and the bowling green are in the town centre. Is this a good or a bad thing?

A Both. The good thing is that we still maintain a strong membership whilst some clubs are diminishing, and it is nice to have people, especially foreign visitors, frequently watching games and asking questions. The difficulties are the small car park so we sometimes have to use the town parking, and thoughtless people who discard their fast food rubbish and empty bottles on the green.

Q How would you assess your own skill as a player?

A Reasonable. I won the ladies' singles club championship in 2007.

Q How can people get involved with the club?

A They can call at the club when people are playing roll-ups on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, or when people are playing league and friendly games either in the evenings or at weekends. Alternatively, they can email gill_howard15@hotmail.co.uk to arrange a meeting and a chance to have a go.

Q & A

Gill Howard is chairperson of Ashford Town Bowls Club in the town centre which is celebrating its 100th birthday. She talks to **Ed Hill** about the club, her love of the sport, its history and her views on the town

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Police launch Safer Spring campaign to stop nuisance crime. Search 'safer'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

You can view all these videos and others from around the county with the click of a mouse at...

yourkenttv.co.uk

'Bankers who sparked crisis deserve prison'

LEADING journalist and broadcaster Andrew Neil has lashed out at a business conference at the banks that sparked the economic crisis.

He told delegates at the Kent 2020 Vision business exhibition that he would like to see some bankers go jail – but that would probably happen in the US rather than here.

Mr Neil, a former Sunday Times editor who is now chief of Press Holdings and owner of The Spectator, said the problem was not lack of banking regulation but failure to implement existing rules.

He said: "I do think everyone was complicit in this. The banks are clearly the number one villain, but everyone looked the other way.

"I don't think the banks should be regulated to hell, but I would like to see some of them suffer," he said.

■ BY TONY PATEY

"I would like to see the handcuffs on some of the bankers because I think they have broken the law and I do think they deserve to go to jail.

"I think that will happen in America, although I would hope to think in this country as well – but I do look forward to it happening in the US."

Kent County Council leader Paul Carter told the conference that plans would be unveiled this year aimed at boosting the number of youngsters taking up apprenticeships in Kent.

The proposals should increase the number of apprentices from about 2,000 to 8,000 within a few years.

More than 3,000 business people attended the fourth annual 2020 Vision event at the County Showground, Detling, on Thursday.



ANDREW NEIL: Angered by banks' role in credit crunch

Prepaid cards ready to help animal park

JUST before Christmas the Aspinall Foundation, in conjunction with KOS Media, publisher of this newspaper, offered readers the chance to win a VIP family trip around Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, near Hythe.

The prize includes free entry to the park and a trip in a safari vehicle around the African Experience, a 100-acre site next to the park with breathtaking views of the English Channel.

Entrants were asked to either send in a postal entry with their contact details or take advantage of registering for a free Aspinall prepaid Maestro card.

Registration

Some readers experienced problems with the online registration for the card due to a malfunction, so KOS Media readers are invited to try again and register on www.savinggorillas.com for their free Aspinall Foundation Maestro prepaid card.

It is easy to apply for and no credit check is necessary.

Young people aged between 13 and 17 can also apply, as long as they have their parents' permission.

The card can be used as a debit card but is topped up like a mobile phone and all profits associated with using it are given back to the Foundation.

By using this card, help will be given to support the Foundation's African projects in Congo and Gabon, as well as to the important work carried out in the UK and other parts of the world.

The card is a safe alternative to carrying cash and is accepted worldwide. The account can easily be managed online with instant top-up available.

• The winner of the VIP family trip around Port Lympne is Elizabeth Instone, from Chatham.

World leaders given a taste of Kent's finest

WORLD leaders in London for the G20 summit were served a 'best of British' dinner that included vegetables from the Garden of England.

US president Barack Obama, French president Nicolas Sarkozy and other leaders of the 20 richest countries in the world sat down together for a meal cooked by Jamie Oliver at Downing Street on Wednesday last week.

The party tucked into a starter of organic Scottish salmon served with samphire and sea

kale, with a selection of vegetables from Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

For the main course, slow-roasted shoulder of lamb from a hill farm in Wales was served with Jersey Royal potatoes, wild mushrooms and mint sauce.

Dessert was a classic comfort food of Bakewell tart and custard.

As the leaders debated the benefits of fiscal stimulus, their spouses enjoyed a more relaxed dinner hosted by Sarah Brown with celebrity

guests from the worlds of fashion, sports, business and the arts.

Olympic gold-medallist Dame Kelly Holmes, from Tonbridge, was seated next to Michelle Obama. On the other side of the First Lady was Harry Potter author JK Rowling.

The G20 summit saw the leaders come together at the Excel centre in London's Docklands on Thursday to agree measures to tackle the worst global financial crisis since the 1930s.

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- Guide to visiting the Kent Downs
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- Cycle route
- Book reviews
- Cherry orchards
- Events and more



Copies are available free of charge from outlets (shops, pubs, restaurants, etc) along & around the Kent Downs.

Should you not be able to find a copy please telephone 01303 815170 or alternatively read The Orchid online by visiting www.kentnews.co.uk and click in The Orchid image at the bottom of the home page.



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*The Cinema and selected restaurants and bars will be open on Easter Sunday, check www.bluewater.co.uk for more details.

Visit www.bluewater.co.uk for further details and more ideas for family fun this Easter.

There's shopping...and there's

Bluewater
www.bluewater.co.uk

Mulberry Tree's deep local roots

FLIPPING over a menu in a restaurant today is rarely an eye-opening experience.

Maybe it will have the desserts ... or perhaps simply a heavy hint to leave a tip if you believe the service has been up to scratch. Some, simply a splodge of someone else's leftovers. Yet for one restaurant in a pretty village just outside Maidstone, it has turned it into an opportunity to underline its Kentish credentials.

Because at the award-winning Mulberry Tree in Boughton Monchelsea, owners list the suppliers of all the main ingredients.

It is a transparency which has proved a big hit for the restaurant and played a role in it scooping the prestigious restaurant of the year title in the Taste of Kent awards at Leeds Castle in February.

The Produced in Kent-backed awards reward those who support local suppliers and producers. Putting the source of the food in the diners' face proved a shrewd move.

Karen Williams, the owner of the Mulberry Tree, said: "It works in two ways. It's great advertising for them, but it keeps them on their toes, too. For example – and not that it's ever happened – but if someone is eating a piece of meat they don't think comes up to scratch, the supplier's name is on the menu so they are named and shamed."

"It's quite an unusual thing to do and we get an awful lot of comments about it."

Today, nearly two years in, it has bucked the trend as its revenues increase in what is traditionally one of the slowest periods of the year. And with both her mother and daughter involved in the day-to-day running, it is very much a personal, family-run business.

Yet it is the food which puts this hidden treasure in the spotlight.

In a perfect fit with our campaign of urging our readers to demand locally produced and sourced food and drink – spearheaded by our www.foodforkent.co.uk website – it is a vision embraced wholeheartedly by the Mulberry Tree. And it takes a need to 'go



BUY LOCAL: Karen Williams, owner of the Mulberry Tree restaurant at Boughton Monchelsea, names her local suppliers on the menu



local' very seriously. All its meat comes from nearby Cranbrook – the beef from the Anglesey School farm and the venison from Staplehurst. Wild mushrooms are foraged locally by an expert and the fish is chosen fresh from the catch of the day by crews in Hythe. Even the flour for the freshly-made and baked bread is local. It has even secured

the once thought impossible and put together an entirely Kentish cheeseboard.

The owner adds: "Sourcing local is the way forward. Life changes and we evolve with it. By doing this we're championing the little people. I've always dealt with local suppliers – not as consciously as I do now – but it is important to me."

"We are a little person. An independent. We have to fight hard to survive. Spending locally is vital."

"Campaigns such as yours are tapping into a real shift right now. It's like cutting down on using carrier bags. Now when I go shopping I consciously make an effort to buy seasonal, local, food."

Delicious Easter Kentish feast delivered to your door

WHAT better way to celebrate Easter this year than sitting down to a delicious feast of Kent food and drink?

And by shopping at www.foodforkent.co.uk you can do just that. We have teamed up with the top producers from across the county to allow you to order up a tasty Easter for your friends and family.

Our one-stop online shop makes buying local easy – just browse the huge range and select your delivery window. Before you know it, it will be delivered straight to your door.

This week, we have Easter lamb, reared in Ash, near Canterbury. It comes from one of the oldest breeds in the world, The Romney – sometimes referred to as The Kent – producing consistent quality for centuries. And at £17.25 per leg you can save £2.73 on Sainsbury's prices of Welsh lamb.

We're also working closely with Griggs of Hythe to bring you some fabulous local fish while being kind to your pocket. There is 10 per cent off all our prices until Good Friday. You



can make savings compared to all the major supermarkets and be comfortable in the knowledge that your fish has come straight from the English Channel.

It's spring too, and this means lots of fresh local vegetables

and salads coming into season to arrive with you the day after they were picked and with minimal environmental impact. So have a happy Easter with www.foodforkent.co.uk.

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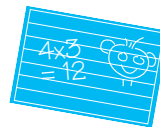


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BREAK TIME

Net gain for Friars

ASHFORD Friars School is celebrating after winning a recent under-nines netball championship.

They played six matches at Kent College Junior School before beating Dulwich College in the final. The team scored 36 goals while conceding only 11.



Blue Peter surprise

ONE lucky student at Homewood School in Tenterden has received a Blue Peter badge and also met one of the presenters.

Year Seven youngster Emma Richards had written to the show about working on the Homewood School farm.

Blue Peter contacted the school and asked to arrange a secret visit. A crew arrived saying they wanted to film a general piece about young farmers. Blue Peter wanted the visit kept secret so Emma wouldn't know she was getting her badge. While Emma was being interviewed, presenter Helen Skelton appeared and gave her a Blue Peter badge. The surprise was screened later.

Army career in their sights

■ BY ED HILL

PUPILS at Christ Church School are taking part in a scheme giving them a taste of life in the military.

For two days they swapped the rules and regulations of school life for the even tougher regime of a soldier.

Four other schools from Ashford are also taking part in the Challenger Project where students and teachers get involved in learning basic military skills, fieldcraft, target shooting and experiencing life in the Army.

They were joined at the boot camp by deputy headteacher Justin Dodd. And the weather meant they got to see just how tough conditions can be when out in the field.

Jack Fitzpatrick, Shaun Strotten and Chris West, from Year 11, were all forced to deal with the cold and wet conditions.

When they arrived at the Mereworth MoD training area, near Sevenoaks, they were immediately issued with kit, including Army rations which enabled them to go on to cook their evening meal. This was followed by a night exercise using a laser gaming weapons system.

They then spent the night under canvas – in torrential rain. The following morning the trio



YOUNG GUNS: Year 11 pupils Jack Fitzpatrick, Shaun Strotten and Chris West took part in the Challenger Project

were up with the lark, frying their own breakfast using Army rations, ready for the team-building day ahead.

The three have all expressed an interest in Army life and after enjoying their time at Mereworth are keen to do it again.

Shaun said: "I found the experience of team building and working together rewarding."

This attitude will come in useful for the three as they will be attending training camp

again in the coming weeks. So far they have spent seven weeks on the project which aims at building teamwork and helps to give them more responsibility and develop life skills.

Mr Dodd said: "This course is designed to allow students the opportunity to express themselves in a working environment and they have definitely gained an appetite for Army life. The boys were a credit to the school, engaging in every activity with zest."

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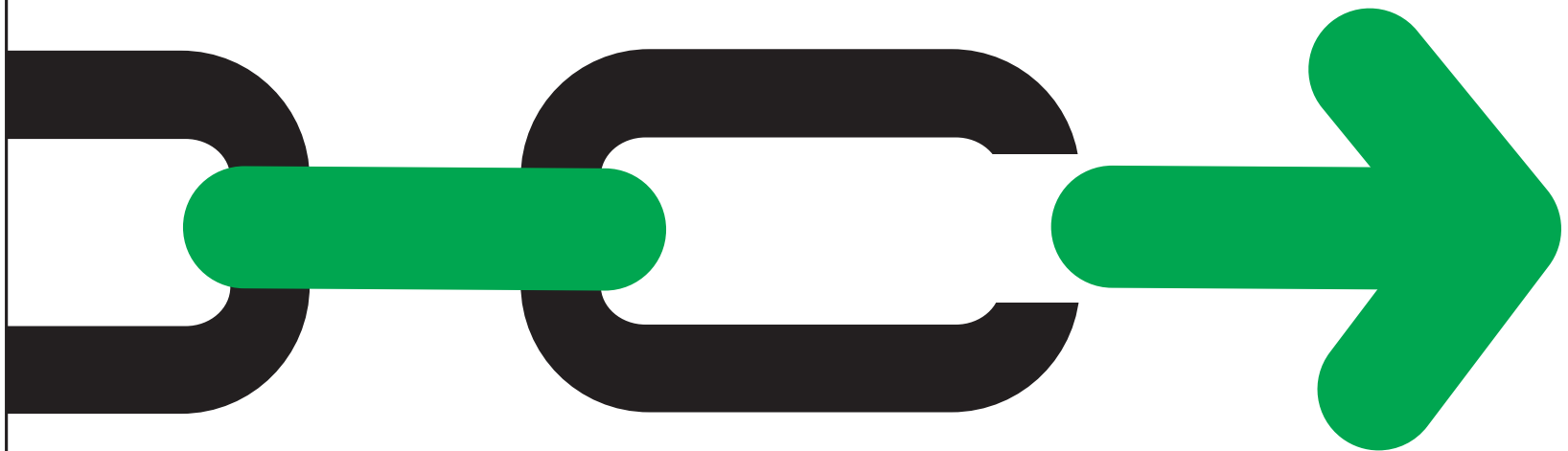
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Ashford – where the future is always getting ahead of itself

SO DAVID Hill is resigning as chief executive of Ashford council.

The most powerful, non-elected, figure in our local authority is bidding us farewell.

What's that you say? Oh, you know, David Hill ... the top man ... the six-figure-salary figurehead. The man who guides our ever-expanding town.

What do you mean, you've never heard of him? Say what you like about him (and you can now, as he's off), having a high profile is clearly not top of his priority list.

Every issue you expect him to be commenting on instead gives space to the ubiquitous Judith Armitt – she of Ashford's Future aim.

You're not quite clear on what Ashford's Future is/do, you say? Oh, don't get me started ... is anyone?

Ashford is something of an odd place and a contradiction in the way it approaches the future and development.

Instructed by Government to expand at a

rate of knots in order to provide new homes and employment, it cannot be accused of being backwards going forwards. It's not allowed to be. But its attitude to development still leaves a little to be desired.

It is, whatever it may say, still ignoring the needs of its population in a desperate bid to hit housing targets.

Huge, sprawling estates spring up, yet the infrastructure to service them tends to be dragging its feet years behind.

It may have escaped many people's notice recently, but the council has agreed to let developers negotiating so-called 106 agreements to offset them until after the development they want to build has been completed.

It is worthy of concern. A 106 agreement is effectively a trade-off to the community for building a housing estate or supermarket.

Councils give the go-ahead, but part of the deal will involve insisting on the developers building a community centre, doctors' surgery or perhaps some landscaping.

Whatever, it is seen as something of a benefit to the residents and prevents the council having to shell out for it.

Now though, developments will get the nod, be completed, and indeed sold and generating money before any community benefit is delivered. It probably won't happen, but would you bet against some developers not quite getting around to providing those benefits? And for everyone else to forget?

But I'm sure Ashford council would never fall victim to such an oversight. Because it is, after all, an authority which enjoys a can-do attitude with positivity always at the forefront of its decision-making.

And who am I to suggest anything negative about such a positive-thinking authority?

EDITOR'S NOTE: All blogs are supplied with full name and address of the authors. They do not reflect the view of the newspaper but are designed to give our readers the chance to air their views.

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LET US KNOW...

If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering contact the editor, **Chris Britcher**, on 01303 817171 or email him on the details above. If you want to be the next Ashford blogger then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of around 550 words) and email it to the editor. And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town log-on to www.yourashford.co.uk.

Write to The Editor, YourAshford, KoS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

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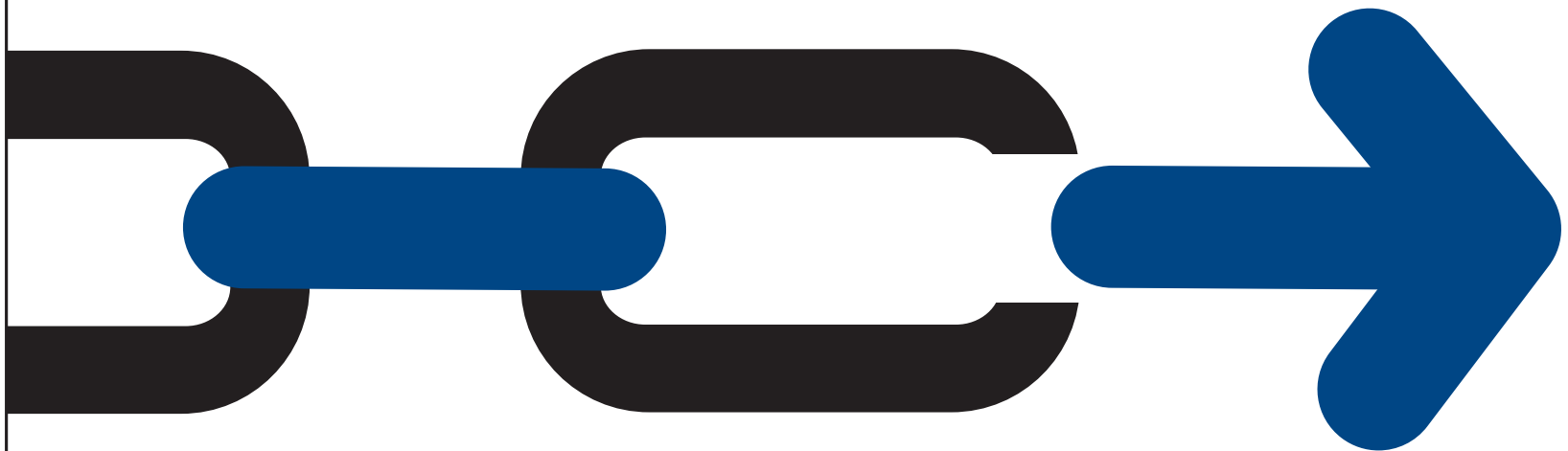
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Credit crunch unplugs Red List Live festival

THIS global recession has to be stopped.

First it brings the world's banks to their knees, and then it goes after the housing market and sends unemployment levels rocketing.

And now the all-consuming credit crunch has hit Kent's music festivals, with Red List Live postponing this summer's inaugural event until 2010. Something needs to be done.

Red List announced the postponement on Wednesday April 1 – prompting festival fans to dismiss the news as some sort of April Fool's

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

publicity stunt. But a spokesman soon said: "We are deeply saddened to announce that Red List has taken the tough decision to postpone our first festival until 2010.

"This is due to a number of factors, including the high risk of holding an event in the current economic climate, and the impact of increased capacity at established local festivals such as The Hop Farm.

"We took the decision at this early stage,

before final acts were booked, full promotion began, and site work undertaken in order to protect Red List Live's ability to host live events in the future.

"Red List Live still plans to hold a series of smaller events this summer, with some of the bands already booked, before returning as a festival next year as part of our five-year plan.

"All ticket holders have been fully refunded, and as a thank you for their support will be invited, free of charge to one of our upcoming events."

Fellow Kent music festival organisers said

they were shocked by Red List's postponement but said the market had become saturated in recent years.

Lounge on the Farm's Matt Gough said: "It's definitely a more competitive market than it was when we started in 2006. Outdoor events seem to be something of a fashion. But it's healthy competition. Making sure what you do is unique, interesting and fun will see you good."

Sellindge Music Festival's Ben Wells added: "The festival market has become increasingly competitive over the last few years not only in Kent, but throughout the country.

"This fact alone makes the task of selling tickets more and more difficult. Put that saturated level of public choice into the context of a global recession and there's no wonder many events are struggling."

Both festivals played down the effect Red List's cancellation will have on their ticket sales but said they were looking forward to the summer.

LOTF's Matt Gough said: "Ultimately what's happened with Red List Live is a shame as it can have a bit of a negative effect on the Kent festival scene – it certainly doesn't fill people with confidence. But I think there's an excellent offering of live music in the county this summer and I'm sure we're all in for a very enjoyable time."

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TOP TRIO: Robert Mitchell Trio treated the audience at the Quarterhouse



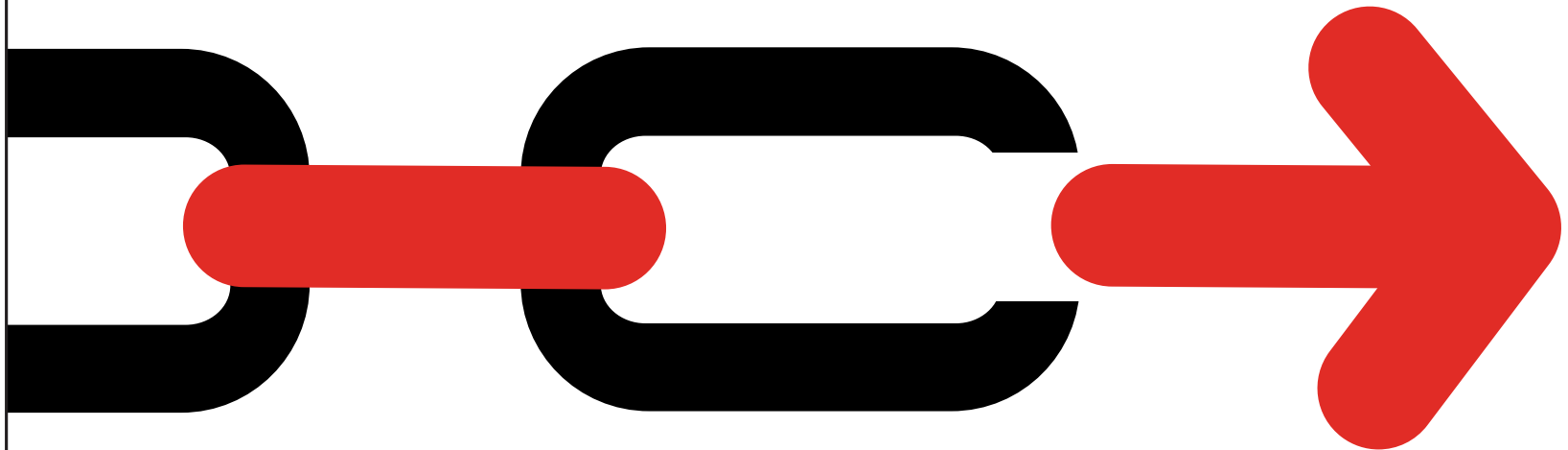
MAKE NO MISTAKE: The four-piece group rock out at Live @ Zebra Bar



KENT UNSIGNED CHART

- 1 D-FINITIVE – Space (from Tenterden)
- 2 The Suspects – He Said (from Margate)
- 3 Timothy Edwards – Escape The Season (from Maidstone)
- 4 Freefall – Pack Up Your Things (from Bromley)
- 5 Directions – Golden Light (from Maidstone)

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TALK TIME

MIKE BOULDING

Mike Boulding is volunteer at the town's museum next to St Mary's in the town centre, he talks to us about his role and career



How did you get involved at the museum?

I was born and bred and Ashford and have always had an interest in the old town which dates back to the Middle Ages. Both my parents were born here. The history of Ashford had always been a bit of a hobby so after I retired I got more involved with the museum as a steward and now I've have been invited to join the committee.

What sort of people come to the museum?

We get a lot of overseas visitors as well as local people coming in. We try to change some sections of the museum every year although there are some exhibits that we always like to keep on. We talk to the visitors and tell them a little about the history of the building as the original Norton Knatchbull School. We also get a lot of visitors wanting to trace their family history especially visitors from abroad. We try and help them as much as we can.

Is that growing interest in family history good for the museum?

There is a role for any museum like this. Of course there is a limit to what we can do. We are totally run by volunteers. We lease the building from the borough council. But we make all the decisions ourselves. We get good feedback from our visitors and that gives me a lot of satisfaction.

How do people get involved?

We are always looking for stewards. We need two on duty at a time. We have about 30 members at the moment. The best way is to come and see us here at the museum.

YOUR LETTERS

Club in crisis as it fights for its survival

BY CHRIS BRITCHER

PLANS for a multi-million pound sports village at Ashford Town Football Club have been put on ice as the club faces a new fight for its future.

Just weeks after voting it was full speed ahead for the project at its Homelands Stadium in Kingsnorth, the club has been plunged into crisis. It faces the double-whammy of discovering a huge unpaid tax bill – and the bitter fighting out of the town may well be over, never to start.

I'm pitching idea for local teams

As Ashford and Folkestone football clubs are both in serious financial trouble why don't they merge and give us one good team to support?

Matches could be played at Folkestone which is only a 15-minute drive along the M20. It's just as easy to get to rather than trundling into the depths of Kingsnorth.

The wind-swept Homelands with its dodgy pitch could be sold and with Neil Cugley as manager we might all enjoy the success he achieved when he was boss at Ashford.

R Dent
Kennington

Financial issue is grounds for change

So Ashford FC are facing a £100,000 tax bill and could go



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into administration while the Julie Rose Stadium is threatened with closure?

Wouldn't it make sense if the football club sold the Homelands, paid off their debts, and played their matches at the stadium?

It's a far more attractive venue, with plenty of parking space and being much nearer the town the move would attract bigger crowds.

R J Buckhurst
By email

I hope Town nets future successes

It is very sad to hear about Ashford Town's latest financial woes – but I regret to say it is not in the least bit surprising.

The club is hardly a stranger to this sort of rollercoaster ride and the supporters are well used to having their hopes lifted sky high, only to be brought crashing down to earth again soon after.

I'd like to think one day the Town will have a benefactor who takes them to great successes, but I'd like to think it was built on steady, slow, organic growth rather than anything more dramatic.

Gina Turner
Willesborough

No accounting for bad timing of bill

The most irritating aspect of the current problems at the club is that it has come at the most crucial time of the season.

And if, as rumour has it, the players are not being paid, surely this means the club's hopes of reaching a higher division and earning more money are suitably reduced in turn? Money which could have helped pay off that tax bill?

And, while I'm on the subject, just how is it possible that anyone, in this day and age, overlooks paying tax on players' salaries? Seems incredible given the headlines generated by other clubs who have made similar accounting errors.

Bob Wilcox
By email

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There's a costly thorn in the Julie Rose side

While pleased to see the Julie Rose Stadium is to remain open, I do question quite at what cost.

If the council resented paying money to the trust, how does that change simply by owning the lease?

Surely in a time when the council was trying to save money, they are now going to be forced to spend more? Unless, of course, they intend to sell the site and capitalise that way? But they surely wouldn't do that. Would they?

June Smythe
Ashford

Town needs venues like the stadium

Thank goodness the Julie Rose remains open. It is a well used, much-

needed facility and I'm sure under new guidance it can pay its way.

This town needs this sort of venue and with the Olympic Games just around the corner, it will surely come into its own.

G Keynes
By email

Our roads are in a wheely bad way

The state of Kent's roads leave much to be desired.

As a cyclist I can vouch for the fact that the potholes in the roads are a continuing problem and seem to be getting worse.

They are a danger to life and limb at a time when people are being encouraged to leave their cars at home and get on a more eco-friendly form of transport.

George Cornwallis
By email

Kent Big Year Out is more of attraction

The Kent Big Day Out is an excellent idea and a great way to promote local attractions.

But wouldn't it be a better idea to stagger the special offers so that not all are available on the same day.

That would give people even more chance to experience what the county has to offer, rather than just making one trip or spending half an

hour somewhere before rushing off to another castle, park or stately home and not doing justice to any one of them.

Terry Moore
By email

We're all running towards a vaccine

We would like to ask any of your fitness-minded readers to run for Meningitis UK in this year's Great North Run. General public entries are now full but we still have a few sought-after places left in our Meningitis Musketeers team for the world's biggest half marathon on September 20.

Meningitis UK has a single focus – to find a vaccine to eradicate all forms of meningitis. Tragically, meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia continue to affect thousands of people in the UK every year and kill more children under five than any other infectious disease.

Our Search 4 a Vaccine Campaign aims to raise £7million to fund research into eradicating meningococcal group B – the most common form of meningitis in the UK.

Full support will be given and everyone who participates will receive a free Search 4 a Vaccine running vest or T-shirt, and information pack.

If you would like to take part, please contact Lauren on 0117 302 6191 for a sponsorship pack.

Lauren Vincent
Events fundraiser, Meningitis UK

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Metropole Hotel	3* Hotel	St Helier	£459	£469	£499	£499	£429
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Serving up a tasty Easter dish

TURKEY is not just for Christmas – with its variety of different cuts and uses, it's the perfect meat to enjoy all year round.

So with Easter just round the corner why not serve up a delicious turkey roast for all the family to enjoy?

Turkey is the only meat classed as a super-food and being low in fat as well as high in nutrients, vitamins and protein, it's no wonder why. It looks fantastic on the table, is easy to prepare and is enjoyed by young and old alike.

If you don't fancy cooking a whole bird, there are plenty of other turkey joints to choose from including a boned and rolled breast and an easy to carve crown.

After a wholesome turkey meal it's time to kick back and finish the day with a cup of tea and some delicious Easter cake.

To make cooking your turkey meal even easier, you will need some aluminium foil – BacoFoil is the strongest and most trusted brand, and is available in Extra Thick (ideal for grilling), Classic and Non-Stick varieties (ideal for everyday use) to make cooking and roasting fuss-free.

Additionally, BacoFoil Non-Stick makes your recipes even healthier as its unique coating means there's no need for additional fat or oil,



so it instantly reduces fat content without compromising on taste or appearance. Plus, as food doesn't stick to BacoFoil Non-Stick, the turkey comes out looking perfect.

We have teamed up with British Turkey and BacoFoil this Easter, to offer five of you the chance of winning a great prize. You could get your hands on some fantastic aluminium BacoFoil roasting trays and a roll of the all important extra strong BacoFoil Roasting Foil to help cook the turkey, as well as a beautiful tiered china cake stand and BacoFoil baking paper so you can enjoy an Easter tea in style. Also included are a British Turkey apron, shopping bag and copy of The Little Book of Great British Turkey Recipes.

To have a go at winning the lot all you have to do is simply answer the question below and



send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Easter Comp, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6SR. The closing date is April 10, 2009.

Question: Which is the only meat classed as a superfood?

For great recipe ideas to serve this Easter go to www.britishturkey.co.uk/recipes.

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7th, 9th, 14th & 16th April 2009

Bring your family to Howletts Wild Animal Park this Easter and create fun animal masks, badges and much more!

Easter Egg Challenge

10th to 13th April 2009

Navigate your way around Howletts or Port Lympne with a souvenir map, collecting animal names to complete your challenge and claim your reward!

Prices for both events includes entry to the park.

£15 Adults, £12 Children (under 16 years)

Booking is essential as places are limited.

* On individual park tickets only. Tickets for these events are not available online.

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Political activist and funnyman Mark Thomas is touring his latest show, *It's the Stupid Economy!* and wants your input to create a People's Manifesto to help the country

AFTER nearly 25 years of making people laugh and think at the same time, Mark Thomas is still making waves in the world of politics.

In his latest show, *It's The Stupid Economy!*, Thomas sets out to meet the people and gather together collective ideas about how we could make our country better. The comedian aims to create a People's Manifesto, which he will then 'road test' and see if he can make these ideas into reality.

Each audience will be asked to put forward its favourite ideas for dealing with the broken economy and the environment, giving Thomas something to work from as he attempts to bring about real change.

He is no stranger to making things happen, having been instrumental in bringing about a change in inheritance tax laws in 1998. Thomas fronted an investigation for Channel 4's *Dispatches* which uncovered the ways in which wealthy people had been avoiding inheritance tax by making their homes, art and furniture available for public viewing –

without telling anyone about it. In the following budget, the then-Chancellor Gordon Brown changed the law.

Born in South London in 1963, Thomas studied theatre arts at university and performed shows in miners' soup kitchens and fundraising events during the strike. Since taking to the stage as a comic in 1985, he has become arguably one of Britain's most prominent political activists.

With seven series of his own show, *The Mark Thomas Comedy Product*, on Channel 4 and a regular column in the *New Statesman* magazine, Thomas has made a career out of exposing injustice and scandal. His investigations have covered such diverse subjects as the use of torture and UK equipment in East Timor, Nestlé's change of labelling on baby milk in Africa, Coca Cola and the Immigration and Asylum Bill.

His activities reportedly led to a prominent politician asking civil servants to 'dig the dirt' on Thomas in 2001, but he has continued to investigate and demonstrate about issues such as anti-terror laws, arms dealing and nuclear weapons inspections.

In 2005 he became the Guinness

World Record Holder for the most political demonstrations in 24 hours. Other accolades include a Sony Radio Award, the UN Association Global Human Rights Defender Award, the Kurdish National Congress Medal of Honour and a Time Out Comedy Award. The third series of his television show received a special commendation at Amnesty International's media awards in 1999.

Last year Thomas was made an honorary doctor by Bradford University for his services to peace and his contribution as a comedian, political activist, presenter and investigative journalist, particularly for his campaigning on the ethics of the arms trade.

Mark Thomas will be at the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury on Thursday, April 23; the Hazlitt Theatre in Maidstone on Tuesday, April 28 and the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells on Tuesday, June 30.

MARK THOMAS

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BLUEBELL SPECTACULAR

Sunday, April 12 to Sunday, May 10
Hole Park, Rolvenden

SPRING is in the air at Hole Park this weekend as it opens for this year's Bluebell Spectacular.

Originally the event ran for just a couple of days to allow visitors to enjoy Hole Park's stunning display of spring flowers. Due to popular demand, the duration increased to a fortnight last year and this year the attraction will open every day for four weeks. Along with the beautiful bluebell woods, there will also be late spring blooms from the rhododendrons and azaleas as they gradually replace the lovely colours of the tulips.

The 15-acre gardens were laid out and planted by Colonel Barham, the great-grandfather of the current owner, in the years between the wars. With an emphasis on variety, the gardens offer a wonderful display of colour right through to the autumn.

Hole Park will be open from 11am to 6pm daily until Sunday, May 10, after which it will open on various days for the rest of the summer and autumn. Admission costs £5 for adults and 50p for children. For more details call 01580 241344 or visit www.holepark.com.



BRIAN CONLEY

Tuesday, April 21
Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone

COMEDIAN, actor and singer Brian Conley will be showing off his multitude of talents next week.

Fresh from a triumphant appearance at the Marlowe Theatre's final gala evening in Canterbury, he will be raising the roof with his brand of comedy and music in The Best of Brian Conley.

Born in West London, Conley studied performing arts at the Barbara Speake Stage School before hitting the road at 16 to become a cabaret entertainer. Warm-up spots for high profile stars such as Terry Wogan, Noel Edmonds and Kenny Everett soon led to regular appearances on Five Alive and Live From The Palladium.

Conley regularly attracted



millions of viewers for his TV shows and sitcoms, before proving that the charisma he boasted on screen could translate to the stage. He played the original lead role in the Olivier Award-winning musical Jolson, which

opened to rave reviews, and he has also appeared in a number of films.

The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £19.50. To book call 0870 4000 890 or find out more online at www.leascliffhall.org.uk.

EASTER AT LEEDS CASTLE

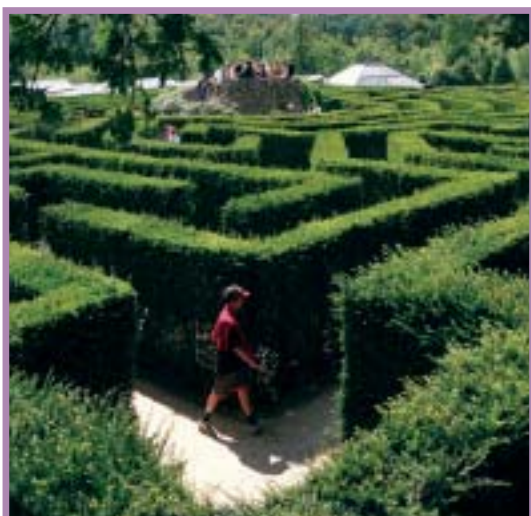
Friday, April 10 to Monday, April 13
Leeds Castle, near Maidstone

ENJOY that Easter feeling by taking the family on a day trip to the beautiful Leeds Castle.

Throughout the Easter weekend there will be lots of seasonal activities for children to enjoy. See the estate's gorgeous young animals, such as ducklings, and visit the Bunny Burrows in the grounds.

Visitors can get creative by making animal masks in the craft marquee and there will be plenty of excitement on offer with the intriguing Easter trail, with chocolate bunnies for those who successfully reach the end.

The Easter celebration forms part of a busy year for the castle, which is marking the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's coronation with



a series of Tudor-themed events throughout the year. Leeds Castle was a favourite palace of the king and provided a royal residence for six medieval queens of England. Key the Castle Tickets cost

£16.50/£13.50 for adults and £9.50 for children and are valid for 12 months from the date of purchase. For more information call 01622 765400 or go online at www.leeds-castle.com.

ASHFORD LEISURE

Ducks pick up the pace at the Flying Horse

RIDE the tide to victory by taking part in the ninth annual Smarden Duck Race on Easter Sunday.

Organised by Smarden Sports Association, the fun race will start from the Town Bridge, near The Flying Horse, at 1pm. Ducks are available from Smarden Post Office, priced at £1 for the ordinary variety or £5 for Super Ducks. Call 01233 770628 or 770247.

DJs battle it out on the decks at top nightclub

HIT the dance floor to work off all that chocolate at the Rain nightclub in Ashford on Easter Sunday.

The club on Eureka Leisure Park is holding its Big Easter Showcase, featuring a host of top DJs and MCs including Grooverider, Friction, TC, Brookes Brothers, Skibadee, Eksman, Harry Shotta, Evil B, Fatman D and many more. Book at www.breakology.co.uk.

Four-piece go Ape at the Hooden on the Hill

TAKE a walk on the wild side when Ape performs at a pub in Willesborough on Good Friday.

The four-piece band plays a mix of old and new classic rock covers and likes to focus on the audience, to make sure everyone is having fun. Find out more online at www.officialape.com.

Ape will be playing at the Hooden on the Hill in Silverhill Road. Call 01233 662226.

Sunday service at The Star sees Circle of Rage

A GROUP of childhood friends formed the hardcore band Circle of Rage before they could even play instruments.

The Kent-based five-piece prides itself on setting poetic lyrics to exciting, aggressive music. Hear examples online at www.myspace.com/circleofrageuk.

Circle of Rage will be playing at The Star in East Hill, Ashford, at 7pm on Easter Sunday. Call 01233 620391.

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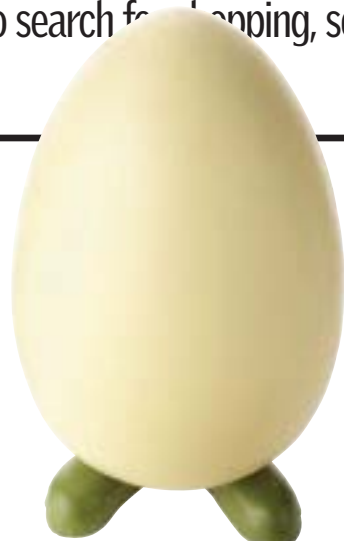
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ASHFORD SHOPPING

Don't leave out the cats and dogs this weekend

WHEN all the family is enjoying the Easter celebrations, do not forget your furry friends.

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Priced from £1.99, there is a delicious treat for even the smallest member of the family.

Handy guide helps you get more out of town

FIND out what Tenterden has to offer visitors with the new Shoppers' Guide.

The guide lists the town's diverse range of shops, from high street retailers to boutiques, along with its array of cafes and restaurants to suit all tastes. Complete with a travel-sized map, the guide also includes information about the fascinating attractions in the town.

The guide is available free from the Tenterden Gateway in Manor Row or at www.tenterdentown.co.uk.

Square up to birthday celebrations in centre

COUNTY Square will mark the year anniversary of opening its extension this month with a day of fun.

It was 12 months ago it unveiled the new look Debenhams and a host of other stores in a multi-million pound refit. This has helped transform the town's shopping fortunes, with a marked increase in footfall – even during these difficult recession-hit months.

To celebrate on April 25 there will be games, entertainers and giveaways.

Vinyl fans continue to follow preferred format

RECORD chain HMV says it will continue to stock vinyl records as the humble 7" single marks its 60th anniversary.

Once the primary medium for recorded music, the vinyl format has long been overlooked in favour of CDs and more recently digital downloads. Yet it retains a loyal following albeit now as a niche format.

And as a result, HMV says it will continue to stock both albums and singles while the demand remains.

Support cancer charity when you buy the book

MAJOR booksellers are already taking pre-orders for a book written by the late Big Brother star Jade Goody.

Forever In My Heart is a moving account of her fight against terminal cancer and her determination to provide for her two young sons after her passing.

Published on April 30 by Harper Collins it has an rrp of £15.99 but discounts for pre-ordering are available. A percentage of proceeds will go towards the Marie Curie Cancer Care.

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Essential guide to where you can save

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■ Bourne Road Garage in Crayford is offering free car mats with all Mazda purchases new and used

■ GC Stevens & Son garden machinery and Woodstoves store in Sittingbourne is offering 10 per cent off all garden machinery

■ Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate and Herne Bay is offering 15 per cent off when you spend more than £600

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■ Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering complimentary day pass for the Leisure Club

■ Aylesford Self Storage in Aylesford is offering free man and a van for clients renting storage for longer than three months

■ County Garage in Herne Bay is offering 15 per cent off any Ford accessories. Includes car mats, mudflaps, boot protectors, scuff plates, alloy wheels, roof bars, chrome tailpipe finisher, dog guards, roof boxes, parking sensors

■ Owlers Nook in Broadstairs is offering a 25 per cent discount on a second matching size 2008 christmas fragrance when you purchase any 2009 yankee candle at full price

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Business health is your wealth

FOR most of us, our personal prosperity depends on working for a successful employer.

When the business we work for gets into trouble, the employees start to feel the pain.

Redundancies, cutbacks, longer working hours, and pay cuts are becoming commonplace issues in workplaces across the county.

That's why we have produced this Money Matters guide aimed at offering some timely advice to businesses fighting their way through the recession.

We have also included some top tips for individuals trying to balance their own books and plan for their safer financial future.

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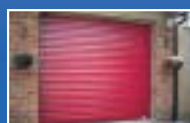
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Be prepared, it will be to your credit

By **TONY PATEY**

EXPERTS are predicting that more than 40,000 companies will be declared insolvent during 2009 – a rise of 35 per cent in last year, and 62 per cent higher than in 2007.

To help ensure your firm doesn't become one of the victims, national insurance broker Bluefin Insurance Services, which has offices in Gravesend, Maidstone and Tonbridge, has drawn up a list of protection tips for recession-battered firms.

Peter Castle, executive director, pinpointed, for example, money owed as a crucial factor that could affect cash flow.

"Money owed may represent as much as 40 per cent of a company's actual assets.

"What would happen to your business if a major supplier or creditor went under? As insolvencies climb, having adequate credit insurance could mean the difference between your business surviving or failing."

His six top tips to keep one step ahead of the increased dangers facing businesses in 2009 are:

- Take a long-term view over redundancies. Cutting too much from your skills base may create irreversible workload pressures.



POCKET WATCH: Take appropriate steps to see your business survive economic downturn

- Ensure your business employs best practice in employment matters. Recent rises in statutory redundancy pay rates mean layoffs are more expensive than ever.

- Take care when changing your insurance cover, and do so only if you are sure it will not compromise your ability to win new business. Many organisations, particularly in the public sector, have strict insurance requirements included in their supplier contracts.

- Be realistic about any insurance premium savings obtainable from changes to your cover. Remember that legal and regulatory risk exposure does not recede in a recession.

- Don't give staff a reason to defect to rivals by cutting back on training and risk management. Dissatisfied staff are more likely to try to commit fraud, which is on the rise as the economy worsens.

- Credit insurance can provide vital protection from the potentially terminal disruption of bad debt and late payment. Make sure you have adequate cover.

Mr Castle said: "With professional advice, awareness of the risks ahead and perhaps just a little bit of luck, well-prepared businesses have every chance of surviving the downturn."

Your guide to get through the recession

A NEW guide to help businesses in Kent find their way through the economic crisis has been published by the South East England Development Agency (Seeda).

It's called Open for Business – A Guide to Business Support in the South East and it offers businesses a simple map to what is on offer through Seeda and its regional partners.

Seeda said it is working with Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and the Government's Real Help for Businesses Now scheme to provide help in areas from accessing finance through to tackling redundancy.

Many of these initiatives are available through Business Link, the Seeda-funded business support service, which also offers free business 'health checks'.

Jeff Alexander, Seeda's executive director for global competitiveness, said: "We are now focusing our efforts on helping South East businesses through these extremely challenging times.

"This package of measures can make a real difference, and thousands of businesses have already taken advantage.

"I would strongly urge any business feeling the effects of the downturn to get in touch with Business Link to see what help is available."

For further information, Business Link is on 0845 6009006.

For copies of the Open for Business booklet, send an e-mail detailing the number of copies required and recipient address to pressoffice@seeda.co.uk.

Seeda is a government-funded agency responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of the South East.

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Ready for the new employment law?



Solicitor Nadia Omar offers this checklist for recession-hit firms who will also be facing new employment law rules coming in early in April

The New ACAS Code of Practice

The Employment Act 2008 will repeal the controversial statutory dispute resolution procedures.

It will be replaced by the new ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

This is expected to reduce the regulatory burden for employers and provide greater flexibility for managing workplace disputes.

The code only applies to disciplinary and grievance matters and does not apply to redundancy dismissals.

Employers are encouraged to resolve disputes informally and consider the use of mediation.

Employers should carry out the disciplinary and grievance process without delay and ensure all matters are fully investigated.

Failure to follow the disciplinary procedure will no longer render a dismissal automatically unfair and employers will not be penalised for technical breaches of the code.

Employers should beware: grievances have been extended to cover all concerns, problems or complaints, and employees no longer need to raise a grievance and wait 28 days prior to issuing a claim.

Tribunals will have the power to increase or decrease an award by 25 per cent for an unreasonable failure to comply with the code.

Trade union membership rules

The implementation of section 19 of the act will entitle a trade union to exclude or expel members who belong to a political party such as the BNP.

To safeguard individuals from arbitrary abuse, union rules must allow it, a fair procedure must be followed and it must not result in the loss of an individual's livelihood or other "exceptional hardship".

The low number of claims that are lodged

against unions for wrongful expulsion suggests that this amendment is unlikely to have much practical effect.

The Employment Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) (Amendment) Regulations 2008

The regulations remove a judge's discretion not to issue a default judgment if a response is not filed.

This makes it essential for respondents to file a response within the 28-day time limit. Failure to do so will bar the respondent from submitting a defence and may result in the claim being determined without a hearing.

The rules relating to the withdrawal and dismissal of claims have been clarified.

If a claim has been withdrawn, respondents should apply to have the claim dismissed within 28 days. This will bar a claimant from re-lodging the claim.

Furthermore, proceedings which have been withdrawn and settled through ACAS will be automatically dismissed by the tribunal. This will avoid the need to make a separate dismissal application.

New rules on electronic communication will assist parties relying on evidence by disabled witnesses or those abroad who are unable to attend the hearing.

Employment Tribunals Act 1996 (Tribunal Composition) Order 2009

This will enable cases of unpaid holiday pay to be heard by an employment judge sitting alone.

Claims are usually heard by an employment judge and two lay members.

This order should result in such cases being dealt with faster and more efficiently.

• *Nadia Omar is a solicitor in the employment department at law firm Thomson Snell & Passmore, which has offices in Tunbridge Wells and Greenhithe.*

Taxman will be getting tough

KENT companies could soon find they're getting unexpected visits from the taxman as HM Revenue and Customs picks up tough new powers to enter business premises.

Steve Carpenter, tax manager at Maidstone-based DSH Chartered accountants and business advisors, warned: "From April 1, HMRC will have a new code of powers and penalties that will make it easier for them to obtain information and, if irregularities are found, to match a penalty to the seriousness of the mistake or omission."

The powers being given to HMRC, which aim to identify situations where there is a greater risk of mistakes being made in the completion of tax returns, will enable officers to:

- Obtain documents from a business at any time, even if a return has yet to be filed.



ADVICE: Steve Carpenter

- Request information from third parties, such as banks.

- Enter business premises to inspect the premises, business assets and documents.

Mr Carpenter continued: "Although genuine mistakes will not incur a charge, penalties will be charged as a percentage of any additional tax due and are banded depending upon circumstances."

"For example, if the mistake arises because you

failed to take reasonable care in completing your tax return, the penalty will be up to 30 per cent, but if it is a deliberate understatement that you attempt to conceal, the penalty could be up to 100 per cent.

"The concept of 'taking reasonable care' is key to the value of the penalty and will vary from taxpayer to taxpayer."

"A large company with its own accounts department will be expected to have a higher standard of accuracy in its record keeping than an individual, but both must keep adequate records to enable them to complete the required returns and to spot a significant error."

"The processes are becoming more structured and so, to avoid penalties in the future, it is important to ensure your records are adequate and to seek advice for your particular situation."

By **PAM LOCH** and **ANDREW BAYJOU**

EMPLOYERS need to brace themselves now for more employment law changes.

Some changes will have an impact on how businesses have to manage their employees, while others will result in a greater financial burden on businesses.

On April 6 the Employment Act 2008 abolishes the much-criticised statutory disciplinary, dismissal and grievance procedures, and businesses will be required to comply with the new ACAS Code of Practice.

The code will not be legally binding but it will be regarded as best practice and it will be used to determine whether a fair procedure has been followed.

Defending an employment claim will become easier, though Employment Tribunals will no longer be compelled to decide that a dismissal was automatically unfair if the employer failed to follow one part of the old procedure.

Interestingly the code will not apply to all dismissals. For example it won't apply to redundancies.

There are also complex transitional provisions and employers should exercise caution and take early advice as a failure to follow the code could result in an employment tribunal increasing an award of compensation by up to 25 per cent.

Aside from the demise of the statutory procedures, other changes impacting on businesses from April 6 include increases in:

- Statutory Sick Pay to £79.15 a week
- Statutory Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Pay to £123.06 a week.

These increases are in line with the annual changes the Government announces in these benefits and in certain cases the payments can be recovered from the Government. Rumours abound that statutory redundancy pay may be increased from the present cap of £350 a week – but these remain rumours at present.

Aside from those benefits increasing, holiday entitlement is also increasing. From April 1 the

NEW LAW: From April 1 the minimum paid holiday for workers will increase to 5.6 weeks or 28 days each year



Businesses prepare for the tide of change

minimum paid holiday for workers increased to 5.6 weeks or 28 days each year. This should be pro-rated for part-time workers.

For businesses already offering workers 28 days including bank holidays there is no change.

For those that don't offer this at the moment though, they should review their terms and conditions to ensure 28 days holiday is the minimum entitlement.

April also sees the extension of the right to request flexible working to parents of children up to 16 years of age being introduced.

Businesses should ensure that their employment policies and procedures reflect this new right. Although it does not give a right to flexible working, businesses should prepare themselves for an increase in requests to work flexibly from employees with children

over six years of age.

From April 6, a failure to pay the national minimum wage to workers could result in a criminal penalty and a claim for underpayment of arrears plus a financial penalty.

HM Revenue and Customs will have compliance officers with additional inspection powers to search, seize and remove documents.

National minimum wage offences will carry criminal penalties ranging from £100 to £5,000.

Some of these changes could have a negative impact on businesses and increase their costs at an already difficult time. However the abolition of the statutory procedures should be a very positive step for businesses going forward.

• Pam Loch and Andrew Bayjou of employment law firm Loch Associates.

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■ Theatre Royal in Margate is offering two tickets for £20 Digby Fairweather's Half Dozen – legendary jazz, Saturday, May 2

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Renting or buying? Move your business into the right property

■ BY TONY PATEY

MANY firms battling the recession are thinking of moving – but a commercial property is a major undertaking not to be taken lightly as it can affect a company's growth for a long time.

Experts say there are as many opinions regarding buying or renting commercial properties as there are commercial properties – so before you decide which way to jump, your business should take into account its own strengths, weaknesses and future plans.

What suits others won't necessarily suit you. Your premises may turn out to be your business's largest fixed asset, which makes your choice of whether to rent or buy property an important one.

There are many reasons for renting, including:

- Saving capital outlay
- Flexibility of location
- Savings on maintenance and other costs.

As a rule of thumb, renting is a good option for new businesses as it cuts down on the capital outlay needed and potentially saves having to borrow as much capital from other sources.

If you have a low cash flow and prefer to keep your property costs flexible, then renting may be the best option as it releases more money to invest in equipment, stock and employees' salaries.

Renting also enables your business the flexibility to relocate at relatively short notice should you need to expand or follow business trends.

The responsibility for maintenance, fixtures and security also rest with the owner of the property, taking away the uncertainty of these costs and helping you to budget better.

One downside of renting is the possibility of future rent rises, so it is important to know how and when the rent will be reviewed, prior to signing the lease.

The main advantages of buying are:

- Owning an asset
- Flexibility of the space to suit the business
- Tax advantages

In the long term a property that has been purchased with a commercial mortgage has the potential to increase in value, which strengthens your assets.



EASY?: If you have a low cash flow and prefer to keep your property costs flexible, then renting may be the best option

A mortgage is usually the highest fixed cost of any business, so if you are a company with a good cash flow and relatively low fixed costs then purchasing a property may well be right for you.

When you own your commercial property you can develop the space as you require with the possibility of subletting any unused room, giving your business extra income.

Generally mortgage repayments are at similar levels to rental payments, and although mortgage interest rates may increase on a commercial mortgage these are tax-deductible.

When you own a property the possibility of large rent increases is removed, which enables you to budget better and provides greater security.

One of the downsides of buying is you'll need to come up with a large deposit, and in the initial stages of any business this money could be put to other more immediate business uses.

It also becomes more difficult to relocate your business should circumstances change.

Getting out of a rental agreement is far easier and usually a lot quicker than selling premises or re-letting.

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Where there's a will there's a better way

WE can always be sure of two things – recession or no recession – and that's taxes and the Grim Reaper.

And in a time of economic turmoil you don't want your family having to cope with your tangled estate if you drop off the twig and don't leave a will.

Those of us who have come across the chaos which can happen when someone dies intestate invariably have some awful tales to tell of 'what went to whom' – and why.

Intestacy

With intestacy rules having changed recently, the picture is likely to become even more confusing, says Chatham-based law firm Stephens & Son.

Although people who inherit under the rules have not changed, the amounts involved have.

If you are married with children, the first £250,000 of your estate will now go to your surviving spouse, with the rest divided among your children.

However, the picture gets much more complex if you don't have a spouse or civil partner, or children – as surviving parents and siblings are then brought into the equation.

Ultimately, half-brothers and sisters and cousins can fall into the frame if there is no closer next of kin.

Stephens solicitor Caroline Brooks-Johnson

■ BY TONY PATEY

said: "Too many people still think that it doesn't matter to them what happens to their estate once they are dead and gone.

"In reality, it can be a costly and time-consuming process for surviving relatives to deal with intestacy and all too often it leads to family disputes and bitter arguments.

"Making a will and keeping it up-to-date is the only sure-fire way of ensuring your legacy is left to those whom you want to inherit.

"Long-lost cousins that you fell out with more than 20 years ago often emerge from the woodwork when there's no will to be found.

"If you die without a valid will your estate will be administered in accordance with the intestacy rules.

"This is a statutory 'pecking order' which dictates who gets what from your estate and who is entitled to administer that estate.

"By their very nature the intestacy rules must be general and it therefore stands to reason that they will not be suitable for everyone."

Wills can be used to encompass not only who you would like to administer your estate upon your death and to list your beneficiaries, but also to appoint guardians of children under 18, make personal gifts (of jewellery, for example), set out your funeral wishes, incorporate tax saving measures and deal with a whole host of business and family matters.



BLACK AND WHITE: Making a will and keeping it up-to-date is the only way of ensuring your legacy is left to who you want

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Avalone Flooring Ltd in Strood is offering 10 per cent off carpets

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £25 off removal of skin tags, moles, verrucas, warts, red veins, cysts and skin peels

■ KOS is offering an Alex classic light – one of the world's best reading lights from £84.99 save up to £30

■ Bones on Beds in Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off mattresses

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■ Brownhills Motor Homes in Canterbury is offering £507 to spend instore when you buy a new or used motorhome

■ Blakes Hair & Beauty, Canterbury, is offering 50 per cent off first appointment (cut and style)

■ KOS is offering luxury Egyptian cotton 400-count percale bed linen. Save 40 per cent

■ Theatre Royal in Margate is offering two tickets for £20 New English Contemporary Ballet, June 12

■ KOS is offering a Karcher pressure washer kit £99.99 including free accessories save £116

■ Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £300 off all dining suite orders over £2,000

■ Hobbs Parker car auctions company in Ashford is offering cars from £500 every Monday and Wednesday, Orbital Park Ashford

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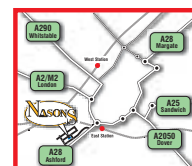


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Keep things sweet and safe at work

By **TONY PATEY**

IN recession business can't afford to trip up – literally.

So Canterbury chocolate shop, Madame Oiseau, has teamed up with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to showcase good practice as part of an anti-slips, trips and falls campaign.

Kent's HSE principal inspector, Mike Walters, said the food manufacturing sector is one of the high risk areas of work.

The new Shattered Lives campaign aims to cut the number of slips, trips and falls in the workplace. Last year in Kent, 1,107 people suffered an injury because of these at work.

Madame Oiseau has a flawless health and safety record since setting up shop in 2005. To protect staff, the shop takes simple measures to clear up any spills immediately and keeps work areas clean and tidy.

The shop is a member of Produced in Kent, an organisation promoting local businesses and raising awareness of local food produce available to Kent's residents.

Mr Walters said: "It is good to see that a small business has put in place simple measures to help prevent this type of accident."

"Workers at Madame Oiseau have adopted the 'see it, sort it' approach. If someone sees a spillage on the floor, they clear it up."



HEALTH AND SAFETY: Madame Oiseau has teamed up with the Health and Safety Executive to promote safety at work; and (below) chocolates from the shop

"This is a common-sense approach to a serious health and safety issue."

Sandrine May, owner of Madame Oiseau, said: "We are pleased to support this HSE campaign to encourage workplace safety."

"We are proud of our health and safety record and wish for other small businesses like ours to take note of the statistics and advice to ensure their staff are also safe at work."

Fatalities and serious injuries arising from slips, trips and fall incidents cost the South East around £78,615,000 last year.

Three people died and 1,830 suffered major injury as a result of a slip, trip or fall from height in workplaces in the region last year.

A further 3,473 sustained injuries that kept them off work for three days or more.



Digby Fairweather's Half Dozen



A must see show, if you love Jazz or not

Digby Fairweather (now celebrating thirty years in the music business) continues to lead Britain's most exciting young jazz band, his 'Half Dozen'. First formed in 1995 the 'Half Dozen' has been constantly praised for its versatility, professionalism and showmanship.

For the last twelve years the Half-Dozen has appeared at jazz festivals clubs and concerts countrywide presenting a fusion of musical concepts with a strong vocal element. Close harmony is provided by four of the band members, adding a new and exciting strand to the show. The group's aim is simple; to play great music, regardless of style, and entertain their audience!

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Keep good credit in tough times with these top tips

WITH the economy in decline, businesses should be concentrating on getting back to basics and revisiting well known and established ways of doing business successfully and economically.

Follow these top tips to help your business through the current challenges and make them standard practice in future:

Terms and conditions of business

- Review your existing terms and conditions to ensure your business is adequately protected, alternatively put fresh terms and conditions in place.

- Ensure the 'battle of the forms' is won, impose your terms and conditions at each stage of the contract formation process, especially when providing samples and quotes.

- In the event that delivered goods are not paid for, ensure they remain your property by including a 'retention of title' clause within your terms and conditions.

- Agree to the terms of payment before orders are placed, including both the time for payment and the right to charge for interest in the event of late or non payment. You have the option to charge interest for late payment of invoices either under the terms of the contract or under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998.

- Effective terms and conditions could save your business from becoming engaged in costly litigation.

By **KERRY POOLE**
and **MARIE THERESE**

Receiving payment on time

- Issue clear and accurate invoices on time and always follow them up.

- Offer as many methods of payment as you can.

- Send letters at predetermined intervals which ask for written confirmation of satisfactory delivery of the goods/services, indicate the amount outstanding, and demand payment in accordance with your terms.

- If you state that you will be instructing solicitors if payment is not received, make sure you do so and promptly. Your credibility is key to you getting paid.

- Record the date and outcome of all contact made with the debtor.

- Be proactive and chase late payments, late payments and bad debts lead to liquidity and cash-flow problems, and may even force a business into insolvency.

Good credit control

- Know your debtor – do credit checks, stick to credit limits and monitor the behaviour of your debtors.

- If you are having difficulty in recovering what is owed to you, seek assistance quickly.

- When dealing with outstanding payments decide whether it is worth a fight.

- Consider your customer and, if they are key to your business, approach it diplomatically.

- Listen to your debtor and, if there is a com-

plaint, be objective and resolve it.

- If you decide to instruct debt collectors ensure you make checks before using an agency.

- Find out what methods the agency uses. Maintaining business relationships and a good reputation are as important to your business as getting paid. Remember that unlawful methods such as harassment could lead to you being liable and can constitute a criminal offence.

- Avoid the last resort. Explain what steps you intend to take and try to reach an agreement. Recovery without legal proceedings is invariably the most desirable option.

- Always try to have a meaningful dialogue with your customer to find out why the debt has not been paid. If possible, consider offering instalments as a payment option. If you have a good system for dealing with debtors, paying someone else to collect your debts will hopefully be a rarely used last resort.

- Managing credit and cash flow in tougher economic conditions is as important, if not more, as obtaining sales.

- Make sure you take the time to deal with this critical issue.

- Lastly, make sure the payment terms you agree with your suppliers match, as far as possible, your own cash-flow forecasts. If your suppliers are reducing the credit period available to you then you will need to try to do the same with your customers.

- *Kerry Poole and Marie Therese, are solicitors in the corporate and commercial department at Thomson Snell & Passmore which has offices in Tunbridge Wells and Greenhithe.*

To see this clip, search 'driving habits'

@ yourkenttv.co.uk



Julie Maddocks looks at how changing your driving habits could have a big effect on your pocket at the petrol pump

Essential guide to where you can save

■ H&H Flooring in Deal is offering an extra 10 per cent off all carpets

■ Avalone Flooring Ltd in Strood is offering 10 per cent off decorative flooring

■ Avinco Limited aerial and satellite store in Ramsgate is offering 15 per cent off aerial installation

■ GC Stevens & Son, garden machinery and woodstoves store in Sittingbourne is offering £10 off Honda mower servicing and £20 off Honda and Husqvarna ride-on mower servicing

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To see this clip, search 'clothes'
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Julie Maddocks discovers how charity shops let you make a fashion statement and save cash

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Living Out log cabin store in Chestfield, Maidstone is offering 15 per cent off plus free delivery on all DIY log cabins

■ County Garage Motors in Herne Bay is offering free protection pack worth up to £400. Free full tank of fuel, free Gard X Paint and interior protection, free front and rear mats, on all new or used vehicles

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £50 off skin lifting and tightening lines and wrinkle treatments. Wrinkle reduction (b/tox)

■ Baileys Nissan in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off all servicing

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Drivers weigh poor savings returns against cutting bills

BY STEVE LOADER

WITH savings accounts currently delivering such poor interest, many people see trading in a 'gas guzzler' for a cheaper and more economical model as a better return on their investment.

And there is also some 'green'

kudos to be had. The Government is using escalating road tax or VED (vehicle excise duty) to drive people into smaller and cleaner cars too.

A new scale of zero to £405/year came into force on April 1 (see later story) and is set to become tougher. By 2010, gas guzzling limos or 4x4s may face £950 road tax in the first year, although anyone spending £50-100,000 on a car is unlikely to be put off by such a paltry sum.

As a result, some manufacturers have produced models that are actually exempt from VED by

sneaking below the 100g/km CO2 emissions mark and into band-A.

Most manufacturers also now have an 'Eco' sub-branding for their lowest emission models - Vauxhall uses the ecoFLEX sub-branding.

Brilliant as they are, 'eco' models often cost more since they have diesel engines and special 'green' features that do not yet deliver the economy of scale savings available to makers across the whole model range.

What is more, saving road tax is not such a great incentive when many conventional superminis sit in the lowest road tax band of £35 a year anyway; over three years with an eco model, saving £105 is irrelevant if you spend far more on buying that car in the first place and are then putting expensive diesel in the tank.

So, check out conventional equivalents of eco models and don't dismiss petrol power; that fuel is still cheaper and makes sense for lower mileage users, while emission and consumption levels are closing the gap on diesel equivalents.

Diesel engines also tend to be heavier, so you could find yourself going through tyres more quickly.

Don't ignore alternative power options either, such as liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or hybrids.

Finally, just look again at what you have to part-exchange; you might have lost a packet in depreciation on that big 4x4, but work out what it will cost you to run it for the next three years - it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.



TREND: Government road tax as well as fuel costs is powering the downsizing trend favouring small cars like the lighter and greener Mazda2 supermini

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BY STEVE LOADER

SAVE money by downsizing and running a cheaper car and then gain even more by smarter driving and journey planning.

For a start, you can save pounds and wear and tear on the car by avoiding short journeys and perhaps get fitter too by walking or cycling; a cold engine can produce 60 per cent more pollution than a warm one and a car used for many short journeys needs extra servicing and wears its engine out faster.

More fuel is wasted and higher emissions are also generated from a cold start – traffic on UK roads contributes 26 per cent of the nation's total carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂).

However, if your car journey is a must then follow these tips from the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) and RAC Foundation motoring watchdogs:

- Plan your route – forethought can save wear and tear on car and driver. Try to take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. If you have to commute, think about car sharing, 'Park and Ride' bus schemes or other public transport.

- Have your vehicle serviced regularly to maintain efficiency and economy. Under-serviced engines reduce fuel economy by ten per cent or more. Catalytic converters are environmentally friendly, but only when properly maintained.

- Check tyres – under-inflated tyres need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Anybody who has cycled on 'flabby' tyres knows what extra effort is involved, so check pressures weekly.

- Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Try to 'feather' the throttle as you reach cruising speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style will save fuel, but never coast in neutral or with clutch pedal depressed to save fuel – vehicle control must not be compromised.



TOP TIPS: Adopt our driving advice to save money and also think about downsizing to city cars like the Chevrolet Matiz (above) or the forthcoming Nissan Pixo (right)

Clever driving is key to cheaper motoring



- Accelerate briskly without racing the engine – pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gearchanges at modest engine speeds can cut fuel consumption by up to 15 per cent.

- Reduce drag – remove roof racks and carriers when not in use. Driving with windows open also mars aerodynamics and lowers fuel economy. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and avoid heavy accessories and wide tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning lowers fuel economy so use the fan and vents unassisted as much as possible.

- Buy green fuel and use less. Seek out low sulphur diesel (City diesel) or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics) supplies locally. Consider a conversion to LPG (liquid petroleum gas), which is half the price of petrol, generates almost as much power and emits much less CO₂.

- Use 'accelerator sense'. Do you go straight from accelerator to the brake? You save fuel if you plan ahead and, rather than have to brake as you hit traffic, gently let the speed of the vehicle bring you to a halt as you join a queue. There is no point in rushing and then having

to brake suddenly.

- Reverse in when you park. When you start off again, the engine is cold and inefficient. If you can drive away smoothly without having to reverse, you save fuel and have better visibility.

- Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank to the brim and carry more weight than is necessary?

- If you are stuck in a jam then you are doing zero mpg – turn off the engine after two minutes to save fuel and emissions.

For more eco driving tips see Julie Maddocks' online video report at: <http://www.yourkenttv.co.uk/community>.

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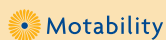
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Is diesel demand peaking?

By **STEVE LOADER**

DIESEL has become the fuel of choice recently as UK buyers seek to cut costs, but do the sums still add up?

Its original appeal was the cheapness of the fuel, greater mpg and the better low down pulling power of the engines and their ability to meet tighter emissions legislation.

However, diesel now commands an increasing premium against petrol and there are doubts whether the engines can continue to meet ever tougher emission laws.

Meanwhile, petrol power has hit back with smaller, lighter and cleaner engines with turbocharging for extra flexibility, while there are other options emerging to save money and the planet:

• **HYBRID**

These partner conventional engines with electric units, but two powerplants and power supplies – fuel tank plus batteries – mean extra weight, while production complexity raises prices so buyers must cover many miles to balance this. Motorway mpg is also hardly better than a standard car.

• **LPG**

Liquid petroleum gas (LPG) seems an excellent alternative fuel due to lower duty and emissions and cheaper car tax.

However, the calorific value and consequent mpg is slightly lower than petrol and it will cost at least £1,500 to convert an existing vehicle via an approved LPG Association operator.

There are many more LPG filling points

across the country than before though – Kent has some 40 LPG sites – and LPG costs about half that of petrol and diesel at the pump, emits about 20 per cent less CO₂ than petrol and slightly less than diesel and with fewer NO_x and particulates.

• **ELECTRIC**

These should be cheap to run, but battery technology cannot yet guarantee ranges to

satisfy many would-be owners. There is the worry too that the car's emissions are simply transferred from an exhaust pipe to the chimney of a fossil fuel-burning power station.

• **BIOFUELS**

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appeals since plants absorb CO₂ during growth and simply release it again when burned – a virtuous circle. Most road fuels sold in the UK will contain at least five per cent biofuel by next year anyway, but there is concern that using arable land or forest to grow 'biofuel' plants will strain global food supplies.



TAX TIP: Diesel ecoFLEX versions of the Vauxhall Corsa qualify for the lowest payable road tax (£35) and return more than 60mpg on average

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A smoking exhaust can really damage your motoring wealth

By **STEVE LOADER**

GOVERNMENT efforts to use road tax to beat drivers into giving up so-called gas guzzlers have met with mixed success.

There can be no doubt that escalating tax or vehicle excise duty (VED) over the past couple of years has helped fuel downsizing, but there was outcry after the March 2008 Budget at 'draconian' rates to be applied to larger cars, especially with the recession looming.

Consequently, Chancellor Alistair Darling

backtracked last November and proposed amended charges from April 1, 2009 to soften the blow at the top end of the market, though the Government says VED will continue to be amended in future to maintain downward force in vehicle sizes and emissions.

They will also continue to be based on CO2 emissions rather than fuel consumption and apply only to cars registered after March 1, 2001; inconsistent emissions data on older cars means these are taxed simply at £120/year if the engine is 1,549cc or less and then £185 if it is above – something of a bargain for the owners of large older 'gas guzzlers' if they are content to bear higher fuel bills, opt for a £1,500-2,000 LPG (liquid petroleum gas)

conversion or cover relatively few miles.

The new rates are weighted even more in favour of the latest, cleanest and most miserly small cars.

Models emitting 100g/km of CO2 or less like the new Ford Fiesta ECONetic, for instance, continue to qualify for Band A or zero rating.

The payable steps are:

Bands B and C (101-120g/km) – £35
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Bands J and K (181-225g/km) – £215
Band L (226-255g/km) – £405
Band M (255g/km plus) – £405



GREENER IS CHEAPER: All Hyundai i10 city cars (above left) qualify for the lowest road tax band (£35) and also come with a five-year warranty; and the low emissions of Skoda Fabia Greenline (above right) also attract only £35-a-year in road tax bills

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Drinks 12 News @ 20:15pm

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS



Tap into a way your firm could be saving money

By **TONY PATEY**

CASH-strapped businesses could be literally pouring money down the drain – by not taking simple steps to turn off the tap of water waste.

Sustainable business expert Envirowise is calling on businesses in the South East to take on board low-cost initiatives to reduce water consumption which it says could help save thousands of pounds every year.

With reports predicting water is set to become an increasingly scarce and expensive resource, and that UK businesses are using enough of it every year to fill 2.6 million Olympic-sized swimming pools, it says local businesses could be pouring money down the drain.

To make it easy for businesses to introduce water-saving measures, Envirowise has launched a new step-by-step online tool that helps companies identify where and how water is used and treated, the costs involved, and practical ways to reduce and re-use it.

The tool also helps organisations keep control of costs and future proof against rate rises and supply shortages.

Last year Envirowise ran Rippleeffect, a free initiative designed to help businesses tackle water use.

Around 500 businesses signed up for the scheme and it is hoped many more will benefit from water savings by using the new tool.

Holly Firmin, South East regional manager,

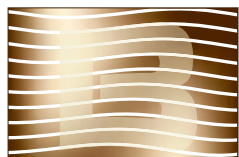
said: "While many of us consider water to be a cheap and endless resource, the reality is that we are using and wasting far too much, and this is placing extra pressure on existing supplies as well as impacting on the bottom line."

"It is crucial that people are aware of the serious and complex issues around water supply and use and we hope our new tool will help businesses address these challenges in the most effective way."

For details about the scheme visit www.envirowise.gov.uk/water.

Envirowise is a government-funded programme which aims to put sustainable use of resources at the top of the UK business agenda.

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By JEREMY GATES

THERE are probably two reasons why the annual pension of around £700,000 awarded to Sir Fred Goodwin, as he sidesteps the wreckage of the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), is arousing such fury.

The first is that much of his cash could come from taxpayers, possibly for decades, because RBS pension schemes worldwide already face a near £2 billion deficit. RBS non-contributory pensions are fully guaranteed by the firm.

The second, is that while Goodwin hits the jackpot, some seven million workers in money purchase defined contribution (DC) pensions are seeing their retirement income slashed by the credit crunch, despite years of saving.

Private

Financial advisor Hargreaves Lansdown thinks the average employee saving £150 per month would take 209 years, allowing for investment growth and inflation, to match Sir Fred's pension pot, which RBS accrued for him since 1998. Meanwhile, those in DC schemes have seen their likely pension income slashed 20-25 per cent in the past 18 months.

Over-55s, in particular, feel powerless as markets slide because a full recovery before they retire is unlikely. How long will it take to recoup £50bn worth of share values in London one day this week?

To have any hope of a decent payout, workers must stick with pension saving through thick and thin. The eventual payout might be healthier than they fear – or expect.

Even Sir Fred needed a bit of luck at the end: if RBS had gone bust, he would have got a maximum pension of £27,000 a year. Those who make no private pension arrangements miss out particularly badly, if their employer is willing to pay into a pension on their behalf. Besides the boss's contribution, pensions are helped to grow over the years by tax relief.

Protecting your pension through the tough times

The dwindling number still in the private sector final salary pensions, mostly assume they don't have a problem. In fact, their fund may face a rising deficit, so it might be prudent for them to save more through an AVC (Additional Voluntary Contribution) scheme to boost their eventual pension income.

For others outside final salary schemes, an obvious vehicle for extra saving is a SIPP (Self-Invested Personal Pension), a concept devised in the early 90s. Many self-employed workers use a SIPP as their main pension plan.

Laith Khalaf, pension analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown (HL) says a "Bed and SIPP" enables savers to switch unwanted shares into a SIPP, with generous tax relief on top.

"HL figures suggest there are as many as 10 million private shareholders, many with shares from demutualisations," Khalaf says.

Basic rate payers putting £1,000 worth of shares into the SIPP get an additional £250 in tax relief, while higher rate taxpayers get up to another £250 back from the taxman.

"Markets and asset values move in a cyclical direction and every 10-15 years, something bad happens. In good times, people happily put money away, and in bad times, they don't."

"We should invest on a counter-cyclical basis. The fact is that Government – regardless of party – will soon raise taxes, particularly income tax and National Insurance, to handle vast debts building up, so it is vital to use the tax shelter which pensions provide."

"At the very least, put spare money into a

pension pot, to hold it there as cash until you find an attractive investment. In pensions invested in managed funds, you might step up contributions to buy in at the lower price," Khalaf says.

Malcolm Cuthbert at financial advisor Killik & Co says some savers fatten up SIPPs either by putting in ISA money currently earning a low interest rate, or a lump sum generated by cashing in a poorly performing endowment.

He cites the example of a higher rate taxpayer at 50 moving £8,000 from an ISA into a SIPP who receives £2,000 tax relief immediately, and can claim back £2,000 through his tax return, so a net £6,000 outlay produces an extra £10,000 in the pension.

The average sum held in SIPPs is around £50,000, but Cuthbert says it is important to check each investment inside it to ensure good performance. Switching to a better performing fund might involve no charges.

State

Next, we come to the State pension: those with a full NI contribution record can count on £90.70 per week, and in many cases will collect more. From 2010, the minimum number of years' work required to qualify for a full basic State Pension falls to 30.

For a prediction on your state pension, check with the Department of Work and Pensions at 0845 300 0168 and at www.thepension-service.gov.uk. Khalaf says people may be tempted to lessen the impact of this downturn

by delaying their pension by two or three years, and living on savings or part-time work in between.

When retirement actually arrives, savers in DC pensions should use the open market option (OMO) to find the most generous annuity, instead of merely accepting the quotation from their pension provider.

Steve Hunt, at Rockingham Retirement, reckons pensioners lose £1.4bn a year by failing to do this. Figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) indicate that 169,000 retirees turned down an annuity offered by their pension provider in 2008 and presumably found something better elsewhere, just over a third of the total annuity market.

"Research shows that those approaching retirement can increase their income by more than 20 per cent by shopping around, compared to the default option," Hunt says.

Finally, it is worth remembering that the bleaker prospects might appear in the pension sector, the more likely it is that new products will enter the field.

Next week, Prudential launches its New Income Choice Annuity, available for clients with pension pots of at least £10,000 after tax-free cash has been taken. It will enable savers to select a starting income which can be varied over time.

If Prudential's new product catches on, rivals will respond. As the older population grows, pensioners have a bit more bargaining clout than they realise.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

For poorer and poorer

BY MELANIE DEN BRINKER

THERE have been a spate of recent headlines about highly paid people trying to renegotiate so-called 'big money' divorce settlements they can no longer afford as the bonus culture declines.

So it's not surprising divorce lawyers are seeing a marked increase in the number of previously high-earning men seeking to reduce maintenance payments to their ex-wives.

They believe that, having shared in the good times, their ex-spouses should now share in the bad.

Although orders for the payment of ongoing maintenance are variable, orders dividing capital assets have historically not, save in rare and unforeseen circumstances, been variable, even where there is a change in financial circumstances.

Where does this leave previously wealthy divorced couples whose capital assets were valued and subsequently divided shortly before the credit crunch hit, and who may now be looking at a reduction in the value of some of their assets by as much as 90 per cent?

In many cases this ill fortune will be shared between the parties.

However, often the wife will have received the bulk of the 'copper-bottomed' assets, including the former matrimonial home, while the husband retains a larger percentage of the risk-laden assets such as shares, options or even possible future bonuses.

In such cases, while the wife may be facing a fall in the value of her assets, it may be as nothing to that faced by the ex-husband.

How the recession could see divorce settlements head back to the court room



The result may be that he ends up with significantly less capital than the ex-wife.

For such ex-couples, the outcome of an application made to the Court of Appeal by Bryan Myerson, a city fund manager may have huge implications.

He has asked the Court of Appeal for leave to apply to reopen a divorce settlement finalised in March last year, whereby he was ordered to pay 43 per cent of a total £25.8 million assets to his wife.

She received £9.5m cash, while he retained most of his shares. Since the settlement, the value of his shares has plummeted by 90 per cent.

The result is Mrs Myerson will hold 105 per cent of the couple's assets, while Mr Myerson, who would have to borrow to pay the £2.5m that he still owes, will be half-a-million

pounds out of pocket rather than retaining £14.6m, as had been anticipated at the time of the settlement.

She opposes the application, with her lawyer predicting that, if allowed, it will open the floodgates to applications by many other men in a similar position.

Indeed, Jim Moore, the so called 'buy-to-let king' has already announced he will represent himself in an attempt to reopen his divorce settlement on the grounds the fall in property values has made it unaffordable.

Whether or not they are successful remains to be seen, but what is clear is that in these difficult times, divorce will increasingly be seen to be for poorer as well as for richer.

• *Melanie den Brinker is a solicitor at leading Kent solicitors Buss Murton, with offices in Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook and Dartford.*

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Don't let the financial climate be a taxing time for your relationship

CREDIT-crunched couples can cut down their tax burden and ease the stress caused to relationships by the economic slump.

The charity Relate has highlighted financial pressures as causing potential relationship problems – but tax should not be an extra issue.

In fact, couples who work together in planning their tax affairs can save tax and so keep much-needed cash available.

These savings mainly apply to married couples and civil partnerships, to whom special rules apply, but some can also apply to unmarried couples.

The tax savings available depend on making the best use of both partners':

- annual tax allowances;
- lower and basic rate tax bands;
- exemptions on transfers of assets between them, so enabling the best use of tax losses.

Mostly the savings will reduce current liabilities, but there will be cases where refunds of tax from previous years may be claimed.

Make full use of income tax allowances. Interest returns are low at present but if only one spouse is in paid work, putting savings in the name of the other makes use of their personal allowance.

BY PAUL HODGE

This tip will remain worthwhile even when interest rates recover if the account-holder does not resume employment.

Where one spouse is the main earner, forming a company or partnership can enable the profits to be shared between both.

Again, this makes use of both personal allowances and, if the main earner expects to have assessable income of more than £43,875 in the year 2009-10, he or she will pay higher rate tax unless some of that can be transferred to the other spouse.

This can be done by:

- employing the spouse and paying him/her a reasonable wage for the work done;
- giving the spouse shares in the company and paying dividends;
- making the spouse a partner in the business.

'Bed and breakfasting', commonly by one spouse selling and the other buying shares whose value has risen, is usually done to reduce future capital gains tax by using annual exemptions.

But not all shares will be standing at a loss and many people who have sold shares before they fell to below their original cost will have made taxable gains on those shares.

If their gains are more than the annual exemption, but they have other shares that are showing a loss, bed and breakfasting the loss-making shares

can create a loss that will reduce or eliminate the CGT on gains already realised.

If one spouse is about to sell an asset and the other has already made capital losses, the asset can be transferred to the spouse with the losses before selling, so that those losses reduce the taxable capital gain.

A similar arrangement can work if a higher rate taxpayer

is about to cash in an insurance policy.

Chargeable event gains are liable to higher rates but if the policy is first transferred to a spouse who does not pay higher rate tax, the tax bill can be reduced.

• Paul Hodge is a partner at accountants and business advisors Baker Tilly, which has offices in Bromley and Tunbridge Wells.



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Put yourself ahead of the game when searching for a new job

GETTING a new job these days is tough in the extreme – recent reports say anything up to 60 people are going for jobs which wouldn't even make a tiny blip on the radar in normal economic times.

So when it comes to looking for new jobs it's essential you know a little about the companies you apply to.

That would put you in pole position, at least when it comes to interviews.

By understanding a company you will be able to know more about the kind of work they do, if it suits you, whether you're the right person for the job, what qualities they're looking for in job applicants – and crucially also how you should position yourself in your CV and cover letters.

Using relevant information during the application process will show potential employers you have researched their company, understand them and are keen to work for them specifically.

Susan Yallop, a director at recruitment firm Adecco, has set out some tips on how to find background information on potential employers, helping to make the job-seeking process a lot more targeted and potentially successful.

Company websites

Company websites are a great place for you to start your research – nearly every company now has a web page, which will include information about the organisation, what they offer as a business and its aims and ethos.

BY TONY PATEY

This is the best place to start when building up your knowledge as it gives you an overall flavour of the company. Downloading company reports can offer a good insight into the direction the business is moving in; this will offer you strong background knowledge should you be offered an interview.

Get online

The internet is a great place for finding information on a company and its recent news and announcements.

While the company website may offer some information on the company, looking for its presence online with relevant newswires and national and trade publications will give you a more comprehensive impression of what it has done in the past 12 months, the direction the company appears to be moving in and how it is competing in its market.

Social networking

This is not just a way of sharing photos and chatting with friends. A number of companies use social networking for business purposes.

While some use the sites for a communal place for employees to chat and share information, there are a number of companies who have started to use these sites for recruitment purposes.

Sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter might be just the thing to help you to find information on companies and job openings while staying up to date with specific industries.

From the horse's mouth

While external sources are all useful they don't offer an inside perspective, only news that a company has released or been involved in.

If you have a friend or an acquaintance who has either worked for or in some way been involved with a company, they can be extremely valuable.

While this information source isn't essential, personal recommendations and incite offer a huge bonus as you can learn about working culture and everyday goings on at any companies that might be of interest.

If you don't ask you don't get

If you are struggling to find out about the company don't be afraid to call the main help desk and ask for company brochures or advice as to where you can find out more.

HR may even be able to supply you with a more detailed job description.

Competitors

It can be worthwhile researching the companies that compete in the same space as the organisation you are looking to work for.

It will impress the employer if you can demonstrate knowledge of the key players and offer an opinion on the industry as a whole.

Ms Yallop said: "Obviously, companies always try to give the best impression of themselves through various formats but by investigating a number of avenues you will be able to get a much clearer and rounded impression of the image and culture that each company is trying to promote and aspire to."

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Blakes Hair & Beauty in Canterbury is offering 30 per cent off all colours with full price cut and blow dry

■ Maidstone Kia in Maidstone is offering a free set of mats with any new car purchased before May 31

■ KOS is offering all seasons duck duvet, two duvets that button together from only £39.99. Save more than 50 per cent

■ Wildlife Heritage Foundation Animal Park in Ashford is offering an amazing day being close to big cats. All day dedicated guide with buffet lunch, tea/coffee for only £99

■ Pomphreys Motors in Bapchild, Sittingbourne is offering a car rental deal when you book one day you get the second free

■ Robins and Day Motors in Maidstone, Canterbury and Rochester are offering MOTs from £39.99. Service and MOT from £129.99 and seasonal checks from £19.99

■ H&H Flooring in Deal is offering free underlay upgrade on all carpets

■ KOS is offering big button digital cordless phones just £24.99 save £20

■ Canterbury Hyundai in Canterbury is offering £29.95 MOTs while you wait

■ Brownhills Motor Homes in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off all servicing

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BY JEREMY GATES

IF NEW figures detailing our personal borrowings are even vaguely accurate, Gordon Brown isn't alone in convincing himself the best way out of any financial squeeze is to step up the spending.

Professional advice website Unbiased.co.uk says personal loan debt rose by over £1.6 billion to £11.4bn during 2008.

The website nominated March 25 as Debt Freedom Day – and reckons we worked for the first 83 days of the year to earn the money to service interest charges on our debts, despite the fact that credit card debt actually fell by just over £4.9bn during 2008.

"Perhaps it takes an occasion like Debt Freedom Day to illustrate just how deeply in debt we are, and it will hopefully spur people into action to tackle debts," says spokesman David Elms.

"It's a daunting task, but with interest rates at a record low, this is the time to make money work hard to ensure any debt is repaid as quickly as possible."

Many will not escape current financial difficulties: accountants KPMG predict more than 150,000 people are likely to enter into an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA), be declared bankrupt or enter into a Debt Relief Order (a new option for people with little hope of repaying debts) to be introduced on April 6, 2009.

"Falling house prices, the general downturn and increases in unemployment are starting to have an impact," says Mark Sands, KPMG's director of personal insolvency.

Our personal debt is out of control

"Whilst consumers fight to keep their jobs and homes, for those that lose both there is often little reason for someone with debts and assets not to declare themselves bankrupt."

John Fairhurst at Payplan, a free debt advice and solutions service started in the early 1990s to offer insolvency solutions to public sector workers, says in many cases people fail to realise they are in trouble until it is too late. "They often go to the wrong place for help," he says. "Typically they fix another loan to consolidate debts, and find themselves in even deeper difficulties before long."

The average Payplan client has net household income of £1,700 per month, including benefits. They are sitting on £30,000 worth of unsecured debts and after meeting all commitments, face a shortfall of about £650 per month. Around half of Payplan clients who are homeowners have paid the mortgage at some stage by credit card, and they don't tell creditors of their problems for fear of losing their credit card.

Since August, 2008, the 600-strong Payplan team in Grantham, Lincolnshire, has seen a sharp rise of owner/occupiers in trouble. Unemployment and redundancy have not yet figured largely in the cases it is handling.

DON'T RUN AWAY: Tackle debts, and now is a good time with current interest rates low

Although the group with the most problems is aged 35-45, the sector seeing the fastest rise in problems is older – in the 50-60 bracket.

The average owner-occupier in trouble has a net monthly income of £2,100 and unsecured debts of £41,000, including credit cards, personal loans, and car loans, creating a monthly deficit of about £950.

Fairhurst says they have been hit particularly hard by the clampdown on credit in 2008, and the end of easy remortgaging caused by the plunge in house prices. For many, the escape routes are cut off.

Payplan's initial strategy is to bring the household budget back into balance: creditors are requested to stop adding interest and other charges, if clients agree to pay an affordable monthly sum to each creditor.

About a third of Payplan clients agree to a repayment arrangement, with six out of seven choosing Debt Management Plans (DMPs) and the remainder opting for Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs).

Debt Relief Orders is a third, simpler option to reduce the administrative work triggered by the great debt mountain. Fairhurst believes they will be offered to people with debts below £15,000, no assets and minimal income, and little hope of paying anything off.

On payment of a £90 fee, debtors will have debts written off, and will find it extremely difficult to get credit in the future.

Some debt problems are solved informally, without using any of these vehicles. Around five to six per cent of Payplan customers take advice on making contractual repayments and handle their own financial arrangements thereafter.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £100 off Elevating TV cabinets

■ Old Sawmills furniture store in Ashford is offering 20 per cent off all showroom items

■ Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate and Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off when you spend more than £250

■ Pomphreys Motors in Bapchild, Sittingbourne, is offering a half-price MOT with every service

■ Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering £5 off the carvery lunch on any Bank Holiday Monday

■ Living Out log cabin store in Chestfield, Maidstone, is offering free installation on all standard range of cabins

■ Aylesford Self Storage in Aylesford is offering three months' free storage for a year for all new document storage clients

■ County Garage in Herne Bay is offering free health check and free 29 point including wash and vacuum

■ Baileys Nissan Motors in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs

■ Medway Stoves solid fuel heating store in Medway is offering 15 per cent off all stoves and installations purchased before June 30, 2009

■ KOS is offering a Remington Titanium Washable Shaver only £49.99 inc p&p save £50 off RRP

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■ BY ALISON PURDY

WHEN I was told we were going for a walk in the island's interior on our first day on the South Pacific island of Tahiti, I imagined a gentle stroll through the lush green jungle that covers much of the island.

I hadn't imagined that a couple of hours later I would be waist-deep in gushing water dressed in a wet suit with a harness strapped round me, scrambling up a ravine.

Like most people, my image of Tahiti and her 118 islands scattered over five archipelagos in the South Pacific was of sun-soaked shores lined with bamboo bungalows perched on stilts

There's more to Tahiti's many islands

over turquoise-blue sea. I expected the sort of destination that mainly attracts honeymooners drawn to the island by its romantic isolation.

That is certainly on offer. However, as my day spent clambering up a volcanic lava-tube and hoisting myself up waterfalls proved, there is far more to the islands.

I had never been canyoning before and the experience was both terrifying and exhilarating. When I did manage to look up from where I was putting my feet, I was stunned by the incredible beauty that surrounded me.

Green mountains densely covered in what looked like large broccoli heads sloped up to

the sky. Below, the land dropped down dramatically to the sea.

In an effort to promote Tahiti's unique cultural identity, the Radisson Plaza Resort Hotel in the bustling capital city Papeete, has its own full-time 'cultural animator' who puts on daily demonstrations of traditional dance and crafts as an introduction to Tahitian culture.

The day after our canyoning adventure, we boarded a sea catamaran for the half hour trip from Tahiti to the even greener island of Moorea. The island's Sofitel beach resort does live up to the honeymoon brochure billing with individual bungalows all either standing on

stilts over the water or lining the beach front with the most breathtaking ocean views.

Our next stop was the geographically-unusual island of Rangiroa – which consists of a string of coral encircling a turquoise lagoon and is one of the world's most popular diving destinations and famous for the black pearl.

Tahiti and her collection of islands may be the epitome of the South Seas holiday hide-away – but those keen to do more than lie on the beach enjoy a fantastic choice of leisure options, from scuba diving to hiking in the mountains and searching for that elusive and perfect black pearl.

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FACT FILE: TAHITI

Time difference	-11 hours (GMT)
Language	French
Largest city	Papeete
Population	178,130
Currency	Pacific Franc (approx 130 to £1)
Religion	Christian
Climate	Tropical

Travel details

Alison Purdy flew to Papeete with British Airways and Air Tahiti Nui via New York and LA and she was a guest of Radisson Plaza Resort, Tahiti, Sofitel Moorea Beach Resort, Moorea and Raira Lagon, Rangiroa.

Operator Turquoise Holidays offers a 10-night package to Tahiti from £2,295 (two sharing), including Virgin flights ex-Heathrow to Papeete with Virgin and Air Tahiti Nui (via LA), three nights at Radisson Plaza Tahiti (room-only), four nights at Sofitel Moorea (room only), three nights at Relais de Josephine (half-board), domestic flights, transfers.

Leisure activities include a day's canyoning bookable through Mato-Nui Excursions, with picnic, £73; Moorea Hiking is booked directly through Tohie'a Excursions; hike to pass of the three pine trees, with picnic, £43; snorkelling at Blue Lagoon on Rangiroa, £44.

Turquoise Holidays reservations: 01494 678 400 and www.turquoiseholidays.co.uk.

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY TOM BETTS

PRIMEVAL
ITV1, 6.15pm, Saturday
ROBIN HOOD
BBC One, 7.45pm, Saturday

IT'S very difficult to know what ITV is up to with Primeval, other than copy Doctor Who as much as it possibly can, of course.

Each time I've tuned into this programme over the course of the past few series the plot has been almost the same as the last time.

The basic scenario revolves around these basics: Lots of running around, time portal or wormhole opens up, big beast of some kind smashes stuff up, more running around, thing is killed or disappears back through portal, every one breathes a big sigh of relief and has a nice sit down.

Intersperse that with Hannah Spearritt, the girl who used to be in S Club 7 – you know, the really boyish-looking one – appearing as confused as the viewers while spending a lot of time in sports leisurewear.

This doesn't add up to a masterpiece.

Okay, so it may not try to be anything other than throwaway TV, but sometimes you feel like the writers of this have just given up and opted for the same story each and every week.

While Doctor Who episodes can vary wildly in quality (largely depending on who's penned it) this never lifts itself above banged-together-by-a-bunch-of-sixth-formers level.

The special effects are hardly Jurassic Park either.

I'm afraid to say the makers of this one have got dinosaur pie all over their faces.

Over on BBC One, meanwhile, Robin Hood has returned to our Saturday nights to rob from the rich to give to the poor once again.

Mind you, this is another half-



WOOD YOU BELIEVE IT? Jonas Armstrong plays the lead role in BBC drama Robin Hood

hearted effort that has never really taken off and looks like it will crash off our screens next year.

There's something about the lead, Jonas Armstrong, that doesn't really gel. He seems far too young and neither cuts a dash or could bowl a maiden over.

Looking more like the lost Gallagher brother than a hero of folklore who could lead Sherwood Forest's finest into battle, it shows that if your main man is flawed then it's going to be hard work getting the rest to work.

I know that personal hygiene may not have been as high on the agenda as it is now, but a shave and haircut wouldn't go amiss, Robin.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)
RESIST the urge to go on a spending spree. You need to hang on to your cash now. There will be plenty of time to buy what you want soon. If you're having a hard time making ends meet, this would be a good time to return to school. Don't underestimate the importance of diplomacy.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)
DON'T let friends push you into a decision you'll later regret. You're the type who likes to think things through so rushing into a situation will only create more stress. It's especially important to take your time with a new romance. You could finally get word about a new job.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753

LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)
TENSIONS are mounting between you and a prospective partner. In many ways this seems like the worst time to launch an affair. You have so many financial and work responsibilities. What you fail to realise is that you need to balance work with play.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)
ALL is not fair in love and war. Beware of engaging in underhanded behaviour, or it will come back to haunt you. If you're in love with someone who is obsessed with somebody else, stay calm. The tide will turn in your favour; provided you refrain from jealous displays.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)
AN angry outburst could drive a romantic partner from your door. You need to learn how to express your frustrations in a healthier way. Right now you tend to bury your feelings until they fester and explode. This wreaks havoc on all of your relationships.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763

GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)
AN overbearing boss is making life tough. It gets you down you that you can't get up and leave this restrictive situation. Remember you have other responsibilities. By staying put, you'll be doing the wisest thing. The good news is that your love life is getting better.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754

VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)
A BUSINESS or romantic contact is tired of you dragging your feet. Unfortunately, you are just not ready to make a serious commitment. It's better to break things off now, before either one of you becomes too fully invested in this relationship. A financial matter is music to your ears.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)
HIDDEN resentments are coming to the surface. You're tired of obeying a stuffy person's orders. Quitting a dead-end job may be the best course of action. If you're looking for a better opportunity, spread the word among friends. Who you know is more important than what you know.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)
DON'T push your luck at work. Although a colleagues methodical approach annoys you, it's essential the two of you get along. Putting them under pressure will backfire. Actually, you could benefit by adopting some of their vigilance. A relationship is coming to fruition.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752

CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)
YOU have to be very careful when dealing with legal and financial paperwork. Answer every question. If you don't know how an entry should be phrased, check with the authorities. A domestic problem could finally be resolved. The result helps you to make a lifestyle change.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755

LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)
YOU'RE being pressured to churn out work at twice the normal rate. Let people know that their demands are unreasonable. If they threaten you with dismissal, don't worry. A personal project is coming to fruition. Getting paid to do what you love is a real possibility.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)
ANGRY words could fly thick and fast between you and a conservative authority figure. You're tired of being treated like an ignoramus. By standing your ground they'll grow to respect you. You may not have a lot of experience, but you are a hard worker.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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No82

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9

EASY

3	8		1	6	5	2		
1					3		5	
						3	7	1
				7	6	9		
8	6					4		3
		1	3	4				
4	1	9						
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		2	9	3	1		8	4

MEDIUM

	4	3	7	5				
		9		6	3			
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	8	1						5
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HARD

			3	7				
7						2	8	9
2	4		6		5			
4		6				9	5	
	5	1				6		8
			1		4		9	5
5		7	8					1
					7	3		

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Angela met hysteria about purple gem (8)
6 Springy? (6)
9 It is light yellow and soft in marshy ground (6)
10 Many a caper by the Parisian in song (8)
11 Ought enemies be removed from place for public worship? (7-5)
13 Shoot, say, the rapid (5)
14 Engagement involved both later (9)
17 Would it foil attempts to catch it? (9)
19 Hebridean island with no priest? (5)
21 Post for 25% of the employees (12)
24 Very modern step wise man concealed (5-3)
25 Royal colour (6)
26 Team from Plymouth, we hear, or Lochgilphead area (6)
27 Risked including Kenneth when it became more gloomy (8)

DOWN

- 2 Thousand unwell at the plant (4)
3 It displays the bill of fare (9)
4 Rodney floundered in the distance (6)
5 A lightweight slab of clay outside that can be perceived by touch (7)
6 Sour-tasting wine from France eg Ray rejected (8)
7 Greek character included fashionable beast! (5)
8 Sailor who is fit? (4,6)
12 Rider to display item of clothing (10)
15 Military unit's job supporting church (4-5)
16 Nevertheless seeking a monopoly (5,3)
18 Stop payment - we object during pay out (7)
20 Pre-arranged strike first using electronic device (6)
22 In a trick you caught little Richard (5)
23 Sad sportsman (4)

SCRIBBLE HERE



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Persuasive (8)
6 Develop (6)
9 Spray liquid (6)
10 Dirtiest (8)
11 Monitor lizard (6,6)
13 Brown pigment (5)
14 Pretender (9)
17 Teaching area (9)
19 Backbone (5)
21 Sweet coloured nut (6,6)
24 Kerosene (8)
25 Hate (6)
26 Zenith (6)
27 In transit (2,3,3)

DOWN

- 2 Northern Scandinavian (4)
3 Speed (9)
4 Skin disease (6)
5 Faint-heartedly (7)
6 Scenery (8)
7 Porcelain (5)
8 Bad luck (10)
12 Improve (10)
15 Disown (9)
16 Pierce through (8)
18 Resort in Florida (7)
20 Drinking-cup (6)
22 Delta (anag. (5)
23 Order to stop (4)

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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No81

EASY

8	7	6	1	3	9	4	2	5
9	5	4	8	7	2	1	6	3
3	2	1	5	4	6	9	8	7
2	9	5	7	1	3	6	4	8
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7	6	3	9	8	4	5	1	2
4	8	7	3	9	1	2	5	6
5	3	2	4	6	7	8	9	1
6	1	9	2	5	8	3	7	4

MEDIUM

6	3	8	4	1	7	2	9	5
9	7	1	8	5	2	3	4	6
2	4	5	6	3	9	8	1	7
5	1	9	7	4	3	6	2	8
8	2	4	5	6	1	9	7	3
4	5	2	3	9	6	7	8	1
7	9	6	1	8	4	5	3	2
1	8	3	2	7	5	4	6	9

HARD

3	8	9	4	7	2	6	1	5
6	5	7	8	1	9	4	2	3
1	2	4	5	3	6	7	9	8
7	4	6	1	9	8	3	5	2
9	3	2	6	4	5	8	7	1
8	1	5	3	2	7	9	4	6
4	7	8	2	5	3	1	6	9
2	6	1	9	8	4	5	3	7
5	9	3	7	6	1	2	8	4

CRYPTIC SOLUTION No81

ACROSS: 1 Sky-sign 5 Tell off 9 Baku
10 Suspension 12 Low-level 13 Theist
14 Hundred Years 17 Aladdin's lamp 21
Idiocy 23 Embossed 24 Ventilator 25 Tizz
26 In place 27 Hayride. **DOWN:** 2 Klaxon
3 Squelched 4 Gas oven 6 Ejected 7 Lisle
8 Footsore 11 Self-respect 15 Expositor 16
Bludgeon 18 Idyllic 19 Alberta 20 Seized
22 Octal.

QUICK SOLUTION No82

ACROSS: 1 Eloquent 6 Become 9 Spritz
10 Muckless 11 Komodo dragon 13 Limber
14 Hypocrite 17 Classroom 19 Spine 21
Jordan almost 24 Paraffin 25 Lathe 26
Quirkiness 4 Eczema 5 Timidly 6 Backdrop
7 China 8 Misfortune 12 Ameliorate 15
Reputable 16 Transfix 18 Orlando 20
Goblet 22 Dealt 23 Whoa.

Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website

ON GENERAL RELEASE

THE BOAT THAT ROCKED (15)



Comedy from Richard Curtis about a misfit group of 1960s pirate radio DJs playing pop music to the UK's youth from a boat in the North Sea. Meanwhile, a government official wants to throw them off the air.

DRAGONBALL EVOLUTION (PG)



Live action version of the manga series, Dragonball Evolution tells the story of Goku who sets out to find Master Roshi and gather the Dragon Balls before they fall into the hands of evil Lord Piccolo.

FAST AND FURIOUS (TBC)



Vin Diesel and Paul Walker return with the latest Fast and Furious thriller: Fugitive ex-con Dom Toretto (Diesel) is forced to hook up with his old adversary, agent Brian O'Conner, to confront a shared enemy.

How petite Reese rose to meet a monster challenge

■ BY LAURA HARDING

IT would be too easy to dismiss Reese Witherspoon as another Hollywood blonde. While the Southern belle's impish looks could have guaranteed her a success in romantic comedies, Reese has chosen a more unconventional path.

From Pleasantville, about a pair of 1990s teenage siblings who are magically transported into 1950s, to her performance as June Carter Cash in the critically acclaimed Walk The Line, Reese has been drawn to unconventional roles.

Her latest challenge, voicing the part of Susan/Ginormica, a girl-turned-monster in new 3D animation Monsters vs Aliens, reflects her tendency not to fit in.

Susan is an ordinary girl planning her wedding when she is hit by a meteorite and turned into a giant. She is then dragged off to a secret government compound and has to fight evil aliens that are trying to take over the world.

Along the way Susan has to come to terms with who she is and accept and embrace the fact that she is different. As if that wasn't enough, Susan is locked in the compound with other monsters that the government doesn't know what to do with. At first she is repulsed but as the film goes on she learns to love them.

"Through the journey of the film, Susan starts to value and appreciate the monster crew for the support that they give her – the love, the companionship, the understanding that they have of the situation," Reese says.

"She has come to terms with the fact that she can't really go home again in the same way. She'll never be just Susan Murphy from Modesto.



ACTING GIANT: Hollywood's 5ft 11in Reese Witherspoon

"At first that kind of depresses her, but then, through the help of the Monsters, she realises it's a little awesome to be different. They all value each other for their qualities, and they kind of form this offbeat family."

The film's powerful message about being an outsider was partly what drew Reese to the role.

"I think it's great that this movie has a message that no matter how weird you feel you definitely have a place in this world and sometimes that can be your greatest benefit," she says.

However much she loved the script, being a giant superhero was tough for 5ft 11in Reese, who had to channel all her efforts into sounding like she could take on an evil alien.

"They kept on saying, 'Be more like Arnold

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Schwarznegger or Sylvester Stallone, say it in that tagline way – "I am Ginormica!" and I couldn't do it, I sounded like a robot."

Reese also reveals that her two children – Ava, nine, and Deacon, five (both from her marriage to Cruel Intentions co-star Ryan Phillippe, whom she divorced in 2006) – are huge fans of the film and both had insightful interpretations of its deeper meaning.

"I was driving them home from the theatre and I said to my kids, 'So what do you guys think is the message of the movie?' And my daughter very thoughtfully said, 'I think it's a movie about never letting someone underestimate you and always living up to your true potential'. I said 'You're so astute Ava, yes that's exactly what it's about'.

MONSTERS V ALIENS

Certificate PG



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PROPERTY NEWS

You say high council tax gives poor value

NEARLY 90 per cent of UK residents are unhappy with the services they receive in exchange for council tax, a new survey has revealed.

The poll of 4,800 homeowners and private tenants shows a third of people describing their local council as out of touch.

Eighty-six per cent of people oppose a revaluation of council tax bands.

Only seven per cent of respondents to the survey, by propertyfinder.com, expressed satisfaction with their local council and said they did not mind paying the tax.

"The average council tax has risen 74 per cent over the past ten years, while inflation has risen just under 20 per cent, but for many, services haven't improved," said Charles Wasdell, head of research at propertyfinder.com.

"Despite massive rises in council tax, people overwhelmingly feel they get poorer value for money from local council."

Rental market value is back on the move

THE rental market has begun to show signs of recovery over the past three months, according to the findaproperty rental index.

The research shows the trend of falling asking prices and rising stock has slowed in the last quarter, with rental prices falling just -0.4 per cent in March, the lowest fall for six months.

Supply also slowed, with stock rising 1.9 per cent, the lowest monthly increase since September 2008, and well below the 12 per cent high seen in other months.

Average rents for March were £827 pcm, compared with £830 pcm in February, with tenant activity reducing the average time a property is on the market by five days over the month.

Andrew Smith, head of research, said: "The UK rental market over the past year has been a story of rising supply levels outstripping tenant demand, which in turn has led to falling rental asking prices."

"There now seems to be some evidence that this downward spiral is slowing and as such we may be reaching the bottom of the market."

"Economic instability and low consumer confidence mean it is impossible to predict what will happen to the rental market over the coming months; however, we believe that there are signs that we may start to see supply levels tighten and rents begin to rise towards the end of 2009."



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Why mortgage arrears make tenants homeless

■ BY NICK AMES



INNOCENT: Tenants currently have no rights and are evicted when landlords default on mortgage payments

FOUR housing charities have launched a campaign to stop tenants being kicked on to the streets because their landlord has defaulted on mortgage payments.

Shelter, Citizens Advice, Crisis and the Chartered Institute of Housing, have teamed up to help the growing number of private tenants facing eviction through no fault of their own.

The organisations are calling for a change in the law to allow courts the power to defer repossessions to allow tenants to find other suitable accommodation.

Currently most private tenants have no legal rights, which means they can lose their home without notice.

The housing charities say they have heard of cases where tenants' belongings have been put out on the street and the locks have been changed.

Shelter chief executive Adam Sampson said: "Shelter has seen a steep rise in the number of tenants who have kept their side of the bargain by paying their rent, but who are being thrown out on to the street because their landlords have defaulted on the mortgage and the house has been repossessed."

"With more and more landlords struggling with mortgage arrears and tenants facing repossession, the Government must allow the courts to defer possession dates so that tenants can find other suitable accommodation."

Members of the joint campaign are calling for the law to be changed to give courts the discretion to take into account the circumstances of sitting tenants where an outright possession order is granted, and defer possession for a limited period of time.

The charities have written to MPs urging them to sign an Early Day Motion, calling for changes to the law.

They estimate thousands of tenants in the private rented sector could be at risk of losing their homes in this way and are warning urgent Government action is needed to avoid a potential crisis.

Sarah Webb, chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing, said: "Much of the Government's focus so far during this recession has been on supporting homeowners through a number of means."

"Whilst we welcome these initiatives, we are concerned that tenants in the private rented sector are being left to the mercy of market forces."

"With the worst of the recession yet to come it is important that the three million households living in the sector are afforded basic legal protection when their landlords become the latest victims of the repossession crisis."

House prices show slight increase

HOUSE prices rose for the first time since the autumn of 2007 last month. But experts are now warning there may be further falls and the crisis in the economy is not at an end.

According to the Nationwide, the price of a typical house rose by 0.9 per cent in March.

This brings the price of the average house to £150,946, the first rise since October 2007.

Fionnuala Earley, Nationwide's chief economist, said: "It would be unwise to

draw strong conclusions from the slow-down in the annual rate of fall."

David Smith, senior partner at Dreweatt Neate estate agents, said: "Nobody is going to pop the Champagne corks quite yet."

Mortgage approvals were up in February, after months of decline, while buyer interest in the market has also been rising.

"People are genuinely looking again, sensing now could be the opportunity of a lifetime," Mr Neate added.

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WILLESBOROUGH £139,950

NO CHAIN Three bedroom period end of terrace property with loft room. Lounge/diner, kitchen, , downstairs bathroom, and 150' rear garden.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



SOUTH ASHFORD OIEO £140,000

Three bedroom end of terrace. Two reception rooms, kitchen, cloakroom, bathroom, off road parking and 22ft garage.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WASHFORD FARM OIEO £145,000

Three bedroom semi detached house. Lounge, kitchen/diner, family bathroom. Parking area for three cars, rear garden.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



KENNINGTON £149,950

NO CHAIN Two bedroom semi detached bungalow with rear garden in excess of 100ft, double bedrooms, bathroom, lounge, fitted kitchen, sun room and detached garage.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



KENNINGTON £149,995

Two bedroom semi detached bungalow with NO CHAIN. Entrance hall, lounge/diner, fitted kitchen, bathroom, rear garden surrounding property. Detached garage.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WILLESBOROUGH £150,000

Three bedroom semi detached house. Two reception rooms, kitchen, ground floor WC, bathroom and rear garden approx 115ft.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WILLESBOROUGH OIEO £160,000

1920's style three bedroom semi detached with through lounge/diner, kitchen, utility, downstairs bathroom and lean to, garage, rear mature garden, central heating and double glazing.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WILLESBOROUGH £175,000

Three bedroom semi detached house. Two reception rooms, cloakroom, conservatory, kitchen, family bathroom, 100ft rear garden.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WYE £175,000

No Chain Recently built modern 3 bed terrace house. Ground floor cloakroom, lounge/diner, modern fitted kitchen & family bathroom. Allocated parking and enclosed rear garden with side access.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



ASHFORD £210,000

4 bed semi detached Victorian property. Entrance hallway, lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, 3 double beds, shower room and to the 2nd floor, bed 4. Approx 80ft rear garden, central heating.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



CHARING £215,000

No Chain Three bedroom semi detached house on large plot. Lounge & dining room, kitchen, utility, front, rear and side gardens, carport and driveway parking.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



SOUTH ASHFORD £225,000

Detached bungalow, 3rd bedroom/dining room, rear & side gardens, cul de sac location.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



SHADOXHURST £225,000

Three bedroom detached bungalow in enviable position near to village centre. 130' x 50' rear garden, lounge, kitchen/breakfast room, conservatory, bathroom and off road parking. No chain.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



ASHFORD £225,000

Three bedroom Edwardian terrace house in desirable location. Two reception rooms, conservatory, downstairs WC, family bathroom and not overlooked rear garden.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



KINGSNORTH OIRO £250,000

Four bedroom detached period house in rural location. Two reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room, utility room, ground floor shower room, first floor bathroom. Double garage and driveway.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WILLESBOROUGH OIRO £299,995

No chain period detached house. Study, lounge/diner, kitchen/breakfast room, conservatory, WC, basement room, 4 beds, master with en suite, family bathroom. Parking for 2 cars to the front.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



CHALLOCK OFFERS OVER £325,000

5 bed property in a cul de sac location. Downstairs cloakroom, kitchen/breakfast room, brick-built conservatory, study, lounge, en suite and dressing room to master and family bathroom.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



WYE £325,000

Two bedroom detached bungalow in enviable position near to village centre. 130' x 50' rear garden, lounge, kitchen, cloakroom & family bathroom. Period outbuilding in garden. Garage & driveway.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



BROOK OIEO £325,000

Detached bungalow, porch, entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, conservatory, 2 beds, bathroom. To the first floor, two further double bedrooms and additional bathroom.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



KENNINGTON OIEO £375,000

Four bedroom detached split-level bungalow. Ball Lane area. Two receptions, kitchen, bathroom and en suite. Garage and driveway parking for several vehicles.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



SHADOXHURST £415,000

Five bedroom detached bungalow. Two reception rooms, kitchen, utility room, en suite shower room, dressing room, bathroom. Off road parking.

Ashford Office 01233 624561



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ASHFORD

£154,995

ashford@your-move.co.uk
0845 370 9710

Your Move are pleased to offer this semi detached bungalow in the cul de sac location of Lakemead, Singleton. The property accommodation comprises of two bedrooms, living room, fitted kitchen, shower room/WC and a conservatory. Additionally the property has front and rear gardens, the rear garden being approximately 70ft deep. There is also a garage and driveway. Viewings are highly recommended to appreciate the accommodation on offer.



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• En-suite To Master • Kitchen

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• 2 En-suite Shower Rooms

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• Bathroom & Wet Room

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• No Onward Chain

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• Farmland Views

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• Godinton Park • 4 Beds • Living Room • Kitchen/Dining Room

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• No Onward Chain

ASHFORD £109,995


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• Terrace House • 3 Beds • Living Room • Kitchen / Dining Room

KENNINGTON £149,950


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BRABOURNE LEES £179,995


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Ashford Branch



Connells

Willesborough OIEO £135,000



- 3 bedroom end of terrace
- Lounge & kitchen/diner
- Four piece bathroom/wc
- Enclosed rear garden

Chartfield £184,995



- 3 beds (master with ensuite)
- Former show home
- Gas heating & double glazing
- Luxury kitchen

Sellindge £179,950



- 2 bedroom listed house
- Courtyard development
- Open plan living area
- Village location

Kingsnorth £179,950



- 3 bed semi detached house
- Two reception rooms
- Modern fitted kitchen
- Large enclosed rear garden

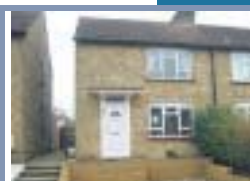
Washford Farm £175,000



- 3 bedroom semi detached
- Lounge, kitchen & conservatory
- Ample off street parking
- Large rear/side garden



Willesborough £154,950



- Three / four bedrooms
- D.g. - gas central heating
- Downstairs cloakroom
- Kitchen/diner - utility area

Kennington £167,500



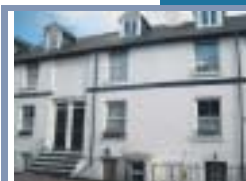
- 3 bedrooms semi detached
- Lounge & dining area
- Gardens to front and rear
- Bathroom/wc

Kennington £175,000



- 3 bedroom end of terrace
- Lounge/diner & fitted kitchen
- Large rear garden
- D.glazed & central heated

Town Centre OIEO £195,000



- Three bedrooms
- Large lounge/diner
- Two basement rooms
- Gas central heating

PUBLIC NOTICE

32 Aragon Close, Singleton, Ashford, Kent. TN23 5DH
By order of the mortgagees in possession, we would advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £118000
any person wishing to increase on this offer should notify rob coleman of their best offer before exchange of contracts

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South Ashford



Offers in excess of £100,000

1 bedroom freehold ground floor flat. Lounge, dining room, kitchen, shower room, rear garden. Near to station.

South Ashford



£144,950

Three bedroom end of terrace house. Lounge/dining room, kitchen, utility room, downstairs bathroom.

Kennington



£154,995

Two bedroom terrace house. Entrance porch and hallway, lounge/dining area, kitchen, family bathroom.

Singleton



£174,995

Three bedroom end of terrace house. Downstairs cloakroom, two reception rooms, conservatory, bathroom.

Hothfield



£189,995

2 bedroom chalet bungalow. Lounge, dining room, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms to first floor.

Singleton



Offers in excess of £234,995

Four bedroom detached house. Downstairs WC, two reception rooms, conservatory, kitchen/breakfast room.

Sevington



£249,995

4 bedroom detached house. DS WC, lounge, conservatory, kitchen/breakfast room, en suite shower room.

Kennington



£249,995

4 bed detached house. Two reception rooms, downstairs cloakroom, kitchen, utility, family bathroom.

Challock



Offers Over £500,000

Five bedroom detached bungalow with two receptions, utility, bathroom and shower room. Equestrian facilities.

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MOTORS NEWS



Kit cars look attractive proposition in recession

MANUFACTURERS of kit cars could prosper from the credit crunch, says the organiser of Easter's Kit Car Show at the Kent Showground, Detling this weekend.

John Cooke said: "Many people budgeting up to £20,000 for a weekend fun car before the recession could now shop for a good quality two-seat roadster kit car that will set them back just £8,000."

Local kit firms include Cobra lookalike (as pictured) builder, Hawk Cars (Frant), AEON (Marden), Blaze (Otham), Cranbrook Kitcars and GKD (Maidstone).



Start-stop is real boost to Fiat star's eco cred

FIAT has a new 'Start&Stop' system for the 1.2-litre junior petrol engine on its 500 cult car.

It automatically turns the engine off when the vehicle stops and the driver selects neutral, restarting when the clutch pedal is depressed for gear selection and driving away. Fiat says Start&Stop can boost economy in town from 44.1mpg to 49.6mpg and cut emissions.

This (£9,500) 500 version also comes with MP3 compatibility, air-con, 15-inch alloys and remote audio controls.



A 'redundancy-proof' deal tabled by Volvo

VOLVO reckons fear of redundancy is a major barrier to car buying now so it has added free unemployment, life, accident and sickness protection to financial deals on its C30 hatchback coupé and S40 saloon (pictured) and V50 estate, including low emission DRIVE versions.

The free Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) covers all monthly payments due on the finance agreement for up to 12 months if needed. The deal runs until June 30 this year through participating dealerships and relevant Volvo Car Finance.



LITTLE BUT LARGE: Despite compact dimensions the Mercedes A-Class feels huge inside with excellent head and legroom with a boot that can be adjusted between two heights

Spacious Merc A-Class outgrows its pigeonhole

DOWNSIZING could open up new sales for the Mercedes-Benz A-Class after a midlife makeover.

Part of the problem before was the current A-Class – launched in 2005 – being pigeonholed with junior models from BMW 1-Series and Audi A3, while unable to match the driving appeal and cachet of these sporting hatchbacks.

On the other hand, it can look expensive (from £14,000) against mainstream small MPVs, yet the Merc is really in a 'class' of its own – a clever three or five-door holdall for buyers aiming to downsize, but keep a posh badge.

In a driving context it also delivers more than most small MPV rivals without a significant ride penalty.

The steering can lack feedback, but the A-Class is a paragon of safety and security when pushed and the latest facelift has enhanced the front end with new headlamps and bumper, plus extra brightwork for the upmarket Elegance and Avantgarde trims.

Despite compact dimensions, the A-Class feels huge inside with superb head and legroom in the back, without robbing the car of boot space. The boot can also be adjusted quick-

ROAD TEST MERCEDES A-CLASS

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

ly between two heights to deliver a fully flat 'van' floor with extra compartment beneath when the rear seats are folded, or a deeper boot with the floor in the lower position.

The cabin feels staid, but well made, with good storage and a well-arranged dash.

Standard equipment on our smart sports trim 1.7-litre petrol Avantgarde is generous, but it has a typically hefty £17,626 price tag and spec'ing up with the desirable Luxury Package – leather seats, auto climate control, heated front seats and electrically adjustable front seats – take it to more than £19,000.

But Mercedes is generous elsewhere; our car was a new BlueEfficiency eco-friendly model that sells for around the same as a standard model – unlike the premiums charged for eco versions produced by other manufacturers.

And you start saving immediately with up to eight per cent better economy, lower emissions and lower road tax in most cases – plus a lighter conscience.

Ours is capable of an average mpg in the mid-40s and there is no discernable price to pay in terms of driving enjoyment, performance or comfort – the best way to deliver the green message.



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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

BRITAIN'S FAVOURITE SUPERMINIS

carsfor**kent.co.uk**

AS more people downsize their car and their fuel and road tax bills, chances are that one or all of the following popular used superminis will be on their shopping list. Year in, year out they are the UK's most consistent best-sellers – a growing trend in the current economic climate. The trio are also excellent all-rounders, but a word of warning: as second-hand car prices harden, make sure you don't pay more than it would cost to keep your old car longer or trade up to a new car.

FORD FIESTA



FORD'S hugely successful supermini has marched on with a new model launched in late 2008, but don't expect weaker used prices; the credit crunch, rising fuel prices and draconian road taxes have made the Fiesta a top target for its reliability, decent driving experience, engines to suit all pockets and three and five-door body styles. Ford has also regularly produced special and limited editions laden with extra goodies, offering plenty more choice and there is even a hot ST model.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

RENAULT CLIO



DOWNSIZING can be sensible and chic with the Clio and the most recent generations have married durability and driving fun with Gallic charm. Again, the option of three or five doors is a big selling point, but our French contender also has the bonus of excellent diesel versions, though the cost of the actual fuel versus petrol argues against it currently. The Clio design has tended to be highly practical as well as charming, with good space for rear passengers.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

VAUXHALL CORSA



VAUXHALL'S Corsa was created to attack the Fiesta, yet has never quite achieved the volumes of its rival. Nevertheless, it offers similar virtues, plus a greater range of engines including a punchy and frugal three-cylinder petrol engine now in greater demand due to these straitened times. Several generations of Corsa followed a 'teardrop' body style, but the latest car is bigger and more aggressively sculpted – almost a 'supersize supermini' – with a sporty VXR version too.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★



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One monthly payment**	£274.00	Mileage per annum	6,000
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Evidence of formal teaching experience or qualifications is not critical as candidates will be provided with appropriate training and supported to achieve appropriate teaching qualifications. You will supervise a number of trade instructors.

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If this looks like the right career move for you, contact Ken Pullan on **07725 128661** for an informal discussion or forward a copy of your CV to **ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk**

Job descriptions for these posts are available at www.midkent.ac.uk (follow RSME vacancies)

Closing date: 19th April 2009

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BOUGHTON LANE, MAIDSTONE
KENT ME15 9QL
TEL: 01622 743925
FAX: 01622 744828
EMAIL: office@five-acre.kent.sch.uk
WEBSITE: www.five-acre.kent.sch.uk

**Five Acre Wood School is looking for a
RECEPTIONIST/CLERICAL ASSISTANT
to join our lively admin team**

The hours will be 32.5 hours per week term time only. You will be paid on the Kent Scale Band 3 salary range points 7-11 £10450-£11847 actual.

This job will be subject to satisfactory references and an enhanced CRB. Please contact the school for an application pack. Closing date will be Thursday 9th April. Interviews will be held on Monday 27th April.

Five Acre Wood and all its personnel are committed to safeguarding children and young people.

KOS Media, publisher of the award-winning Kent on Sunday, the Saturday Observer, and our midweek titles and associated websites, has a vacancy for a

Freelance sub-editor

We are currently looking for a freelance sub-editor for three days work a week. Candidates must have excellent QuarkXpress skills and be competent at using Adobe Photoshop. You will be able to spot a typo at 100 paces and be able to write attention-grabbing headlines.

• To apply, send a CV and covering letter to: Dave Hobday, Head of Subbing or email dave.hobday@kosmedia.co.uk.



Award winning publications
www.kentnews.co.uk

KOS Media
Apple Barn,
Hythe Road, Smeeth
Kent TN25 6SR

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education-sense.com
www.education-sense.com

A Key Stage 1 Teacher Vacancy

Temple Ewell C.E. Primary School

To cover maternity leave from September 2009 in a very popular, small, supportive and friendly C. of E. village school. Mixed year group class. Would suit NQT or experienced teacher who is well motivated and has knowledge of creative curriculum.

If you are interested in this position, please call the school office (01304 822665) to book an appointment to view the school and receive an application pack.

Closing date - 24th April 2009
Date of interview - 5th May 2009



Career Opportunities

Sheppey College

Sheppey College is an equal opportunities employer

Sheppey College is a satellite of Canterbury College and has been open since 1996. We offer a variety of courses in a modern and friendly learning environment and enjoy excellent rates of success.

Supply Lecturer Administration

Ref: S/SH/Admin

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 20th April 2009 at 12 noon.

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Generous Holiday Allowance
- Proximity to main bus & train stations
- Close to Town Centre



www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies



CALL 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)



Career Opportunities

Canterbury College

Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M Campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you.

Head of Faculty Arts, Media and Publishing

37 hrs per week, salary starting at £42,128 per annum

09/11

Manager Health & Social Care

37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum

06/110

Temporary Manager Equine, Animal Care, Veterinary Services and Environmental Conservation

37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum. Temporary post to cover maternity leave not to exceed 12 months.

09/04

Supply Registered Dental Nurse or Registered Hygienist required to lecturer on a range of courses

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

S/RDN

Supply Lecturer required in the following areas:

Floristry

S/FL

Security

S/SEC

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Examinations Coordinator

37 hrs per week, salary starting from £18,963 per annum

ECO

Supply NVQ Assessors required in the following areas:

Early Years

S/NVQ/EY

Playwork

S/NVQ/PW

Cleaning Support (Cleaning and Domestic)

S/NVQ/CS

Security

S/NVQ/SEC

Various hours available, salary range from £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata per annum

Supply Lecturers within the Faculty of Engineering and Construction

Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

S/EC

We run a wide range of courses from basic to advanced level and we are looking for professionals from the various trades to join our team of part-time staff. You will need to have suitable qualifications – such as C&G, BTEC, IMI, CITB or similar and current experience in one of the areas. We offer a teacher training programme to suitable applicants who wish to join us in providing this important service to the local community.

- Mechanical Engineering
- Bench fitting
- Turning and milling
- CAD
- Welding
- Motor vehicle mechanics
- Vehicle parts
- Vehicle electrics
- Brickwork
- Carpentry
- Electrical installation
- Vehicle painting
- Vehicle body work
- Plumbing
- Gas fitting
- Key Skills
- Mathematics
- ICT
- Any other related trade

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 20th April 2009 at 12 noon

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Sports Hall & Gym
- Proximity to main bus & train stations
- Generous Holiday Allowance
- Close to City Centre
- Staff Discount Scheme



www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies



CALL 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)



Opportunities at



Canterbury City Council is a big business with a turnover of more than £100 million and over 900 employees. Rated an Excellent Council and a Times Best Council to Work For, Canterbury is a great place to work. Our conditions include final salary pension scheme plus benefits, flexible working hours and relocation package (where applicable).

Economic Development Officer

Chief Executive's Department ■ Salary range £20,517 to £25,719 pa ■ Permanent position ■ 37 hours per week

We are looking for an individual to manage projects that promote and support local economic development.

You will demonstrate an understanding of economic development issues and have excellent communication skills to develop relationships within the organisation and with partners including the business community.

Please quote job reference: 1814

Transmanche Enterprise Network Project Officer

Chief Executive's Department ■ Salary range £25,729 to £28,191 pa pro rata 22.5 hours per week ■ Three year fixed term contract

Are you self-motivated, excellent at project management and partnership development and experienced in European funding?

This exciting role involves supporting and encouraging entrepreneurship, the development of micro businesses and encouraging cross border trading. French or Flemish language skills would be an advantage and the ability to travel and work flexible hours are required.

Please quote job reference: 1815

Closing date for receipt of completed application forms: 12 noon 17 April 2009

Interviews and assessment process will take place on:

Job reference 1814: 29 April 2009 Job reference 1815: 30 April 2009

We prefer applications on-line. For further details of these positions and all our latest opportunities and to apply on-line, visit our website at www.canterbury.gov.uk/jobs or e-mail jobs@canterbury.gov.uk If you are unable to access the internet, telephone 01227 862 072 (24 hour answerphone).

We can supply application packs in Braille or large print format if required

We are an equal opportunities employer.

Putting people first



JobsforKent.co.uk The smart way to find a job in the County

CAREERS IN HEALTHCARE ACROSS EAST KENT

NHS
Eastern and Coastal Kent

From Whitstable to Dover, Ashford to Canterbury, over 710,000 people depend on Eastern and Coastal Kent. We work hard to improve health and wellbeing, to tackle health inequalities and to provide high quality, responsive and efficient services.

As one of Kent's largest employers, we aim to have a world-class workforce. Invest your skills in us and we'll invest in you with personalised career development, flexible working, childcare, final salary pension scheme and many other valuable benefits.

Health Visitor X 2 (*) ()

Ref: 767-ECL1021

Band 6: £24,831 - £33,436 per annum (pro rata for part time)

Herne Bay & Whitstable, Kent

Full Time: 37.5 Hours per week

(30 Hours would be considered)

We are looking for two dynamic, innovative, self-motivated, qualified Health Visitors to work in Herne Bay and Whitstable. You will be joining teams supported by skill mix and working towards integration with school nursing to provide a seamless service to children and families in our locality. We work within the Eastern and Coastal Kent Framework for Health Visiting, providing a progressive universal service.

If you are pro-active and keen to develop the Public Health Agenda and are also interested in developing services which respond to the needs of the community, then we would love to hear from you.

Excellent communication skills, a flexible, forward thinking approach and commitment to team working are crucial.

It is recommended that you phone the teams for an informal discussion and they will be very happy to facilitate an informal visit. Please contact the Whitstable Team on 01227 378558, the Herne Bay team on 01227 594773 or Susan Gough, Locality Clinical Co-ordinator on 01843 855487.

Some re-location expenses may be agreed as per our Relocation Policy.

A comprehensive corporate induction programme is provided at the commencement of employment.

Please ensure that you check your NHS Jobs account regularly in order to see if you have been successful in obtaining an interview.

(*) Employment in this post is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau

() Car owner/driver essential, subject to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

For further information and to apply, please visit

www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk

Completed applications by: 17 April 2009.

Interviews to be held on: 6 May 2009 (Provisionally)

We are an equal opportunities employer
Committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults



Intervenor for Children and Young People with Multisensory Impairment/Deafblind

Starting salary £23,053, with progression through contribution related pay to £26,421 pro rata

3 x 25 hours per week

Fixed Term posts until 31st March 2011

Countywide

Work bases for each post are:

West Kent: Kings Hill, West Malling
Mid Kent: Kroner House, Ashford
East Kent: Clover House, Whitstable

This is an exciting initiative under Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families.

This is an opportunity for practitioners experienced in working with children and young people with sensory impairment to work as intervenors with deafblind children from birth to 19 years of age.

Also working with families to develop and support individual communication modes, you will support children and young people with Multisensory Impairment (MSI)/deafblind to participate in extended services and community activities and so to enable families to experience "short breaks".

Working within the Specialist Teaching Service and in liaison with Disabled Children's Service, you will enskill service providers to communicate effectively with children and young people with MSI/deafblind and to support smooth transitions.

You should hold a suitable qualification within this field at NVQ level 3 or equivalent coupled with an additional qualification in MSI/deafblind, sign language, Braille, mobility or guide-communicator.

The 25 hours per week will be delivered flexibly to meet the needs of children, young people and their families as the post is likely to require some work in the evenings and/or weekends.

The ability to travel across a wide geographical area in a timely and flexible manner at various times of the day to meet the requirements of the service is essential.

This post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.

To apply, visit **www.kent.gov.uk/jobs** Alternatively,
please email **recruitment.line@kent.gov.uk** or call
0845 8247 904. Please quote reference: CFE/09/0113.

Closing date: Midday, 21st April 2009.



A great place to work.
Our services aren't the same,
so neither are our people.



www.kent.gov.uk/jobs

ACCOUNTS CLERK

Six Month Contract

Salary dependant on experience.

Clive Emson Auctioneers has a vacancy for a Full-time Accounts Clerk to join our Maidstone Office.

Duties: All aspects of the running of our busy Accounts Department including data inputting, daily management of invoices, payroll, clients account, monthly bank reconciliations and all other duties up to trial balance level.

Sage Line 50 experience essential.
AAT qualification or equivalent desirable.

Apply in writing, with CV, to: Miss Andrea Bennett, Clive Emson Auctioneers, Rocky Hill, London Road, Maidstone, ME16 8PY

or email: andrea@cliveemson.co.uk

Closing Date: Friday, 24 April 2009

Clive Emson
LAND AND PROPERTY AUCTIONEERS

Teachers Needed

Primary, Secondary and SEN.

Capita Education Resourcing is the leading provider of educational staff throughout the UK.

Our dedicated and friendly Kent team can provide you with:

- ✓ Daily/weekly/termly supply opportunities
- ✓ Excellent rates of pay – paid weekly
- ✓ Free in-service training and CPD assessment
- ✓ Free use of resource centre
- ✓ An out-of-hours service

Even if you can only spare one day a week we would love to hear from you.

To find out more information
and to register with us, please call us free on:

0800 731 6871

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(Agy)

or e-mail
jean.read@capita.co.uk

Committed to equal opportunities



St Simon Stock Catholic School
Oakwood Park, Whitstable, Kent, ME16 8EP

SCIENCE LABORATORY TECHNICIAN DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY TECHNICIAN

Science Laboratory Technician, 35 hours per week for 38 weeks a year (term time only).

Design & Technology Technician, part-time for 38 weeks a year (term time only).

Both salaries dependent on experience - Band 3 Kent Scheme Salaries

For further information please contact the Headteacher's P.A. Mrs. Theisen on telephone number 01622 689422 or email **headteacher@st-simon-stock.kent.sch.uk**

You can also visit our website to download an application form and job description at **www.st-simon-stock.kent.sch.uk**

Closing date, Friday 24th April 2009 at 2pm - interviews will take place shortly afterwards.

We are committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults



KOS Media is a highly successful newspaper publisher within Kent, that has received many awards from the newspaper industry for the innovative Kent on Sunday, Kent on Saturday and numerous mid-week newspapers.

We now have vacancies for experienced

Mac Operators

We are looking for experienced, confident, self-motivated team players who wish to gain experience within the industry to further their career.

The individual must have relevant Mac experience including knowledge of Quark, Photoshop and Illustrator. The ability to touch-type would be advantageous.

The candidate should be able to work under pressure, meet strict deadlines and be eager to work within a team environment to ensure the smooth operation of our fast-paced production department. Hours will be variable.

To apply, send a CV and covering letter to:

**Personnel
KOS Media
Apple Barn
Hythe Road
Smeeth
Kent TN25 6SR**

or email: **personnel@kosmedia.co.uk**



Award winning publications
www.kentnews.co.uk

JOURNALISTS REQUIRED (Freelance/Contract)

KOS Media launched its Midweek series of local newspapers 18 months ago and there are now 10 titles covering towns and districts across East and Mid Kent.

Our industry is going through change but KOS Media's successful mix of newspapers, websites and online TV offers news journalists a unique challenge.

If you think you would like to be part of a growing media company and you are experienced, able to write great copy, confident enough to take responsibility and also come up with great ideas, I'd like to hear from you.

I have freelance and contract positions which I know will suit a lot of good journalists in this county.



Award winning publications
www.kentnews.co.uk

Contact:

**Gary Wright,
Midweek Group Editor
on 01303 817032
or email **gary.wright@kosmedia.co.uk****

To advertise in this section **01303 817040**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

KOS MEDIA (PUBLISHING) LTD

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Advertisements will be accepted only on the express condition that the advertiser warrants that the advertisement does not in any way contravene any existing legislation and in particular the Trade and Description Act 1968 and the Consumer Credit Act 1974.

2. It is the responsibility of all advertisers to ensure that all advertising meets all forms of government legislation and KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd (the "media owner") takes no responsibility for liability in errors and omissions to the content of our media.

3. All rates quoted are subject to VAT at the rate currently in force at the time the advertisement appears.

4. All rates within the annual advertising agreement will be rate protected for 12 months from the first date of publication under the signed agreement.

5. Any unsuitable material posted on any website belonging to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd by the advertiser or any associated third party will be removed or refused. All passwords and security supplied to the advertiser by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in relation to the use of the posting of material via the media owner's online administration tool will be the responsibility of the advertiser. The advertiser indemnifies KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd against any damages as a result of misuse of these privileges by either the advertiser or any third party given password privileges by the advertiser.

6. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to change passwords intermittently to ensure the overall and ongoing security of its websites within the public domain.

7. Copyright and licenses for voice-over/music/photography or film for advertising promotions or otherwise within the various forms of media in print, online and moving film owned by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must have been sought, verified or paid for by the advertiser where applicable. Approval or permission must have been given by any potential beneficial owner voice-over or music. The advertiser must be able to verify any statements or claims (promotional or otherwise) in relation to their products/services promoted within any of the media offerings belonging to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd.

8. Where shrinkage of an advertisement occurs for whatever reason, the advertisement will be charged to the nearest full centimetre where it relates to the media owner's printed publications. This will NOT apply to full-page advertisements, which remain full pages even after shrinkage.

9. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to omit or refuse any advertisement/commercial/web content without notice or explanation. In these terms the word "advertiser" shall be construed to include any person or organisation placing an advertisement on behalf of another.

10. A guarantee of insertion cannot be given and the media owners shall not be liable for any loss or damage caused by any error inaccuracy within your marketing content. In no case shall the total liability of the media owner for any error or omission exceed the price charged by the media owners for that advertising.

11. No liability is accepted for any loss or damage alleged to have arisen through delay in forwarding replies to Box numbers, however caused, nor for the loss or damage to any artwork supplied.

12. Claims for any error or inaccuracy in your media messages with KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be made in writing to the accounts department within 10 days of publishing.

13. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions made on their websites by the advertiser.

14. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd has the right to cancel the advertiser's annual membership without notice should the advertiser deliberately publish out of date material or content on any of the media owner's online digital platforms. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd will seek to recover, in full, all outstanding invoices in relation to the signed annual membership as a result of the advertiser's negligence in this regard and reserves the right to claim damages for any such action.

15. Advertisers are requested to check their advertisements after the first insertion. The media owner will not be responsible for any errors on subsequent insertions, which have not been advised to them in writing.

16. A minimum of one month's notice must be given in writing for any cancellation of the signed annual advertiser's agreement. Upon cancellation, all discounts from KOS Media's standard effective media advertising rate card (July 2008-June 2009) will be recalculated and adjusted accordingly in line with KOS Media's standard media rate card (effective July 2008-June 2009) and will reflect the revised length of commitment denoted by the advertiser's written cancellation. Any surcharges, refunds or costs in relation to the production of the advertiser's TV commercial for the commitment set out within the advertiser's agreement will be met in full by the advertiser as per KOS Media's standard media advertising rate card (July 2008-June 2009). Discounts will be reapplied and any refunds or surcharges will be paid by either party within 30 days of the advertiser's written cancellation. Any other advertising placed must give a minimum of seven days' written notice and any discounts given for series bookings will be forfeited by the advertiser upon cancellation.

17. Seasonal contracts, Your Professional classified advertisements or any uplift advertising within the annual contract with the advertiser will be invoiced in full - at rate card - on receipt of any written cancellation of this contract within the 12-months.

18. All uplift advertisements must be booked in at least three months in advance of publication and will be subject to availability. All dates booked will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

19. The advertiser must agree to the date and time of filming of any online TV advertising commercial supplied by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd within the advertiser's agreement, (Platinum, Gold, Silver standard of commercial). Should, for any reason, the advertiser not be available at the agreed time without giving sufficient notice (at least 48 hours), KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to charge for any further TV production at its standard published hourly rate should the advertiser still wish to use KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd's production services to complete its TV commercial or photographic imagery included in the advertiser's agreement. The advertiser will approve and accept that there are only two choices of voice-over and music offered by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd. Should an advertiser wish to use other voice-overs or non-copyright free music it is the responsibility of the advertiser to pay the PRS rights should they be required to do so. Any changes to or failure to approve the TV production by the deadlines agreed between both parties will result in KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd being given permission by the advertiser to replace the TV commercial with pictures or stills from a choice of photography supplied by the media owner until the advertiser can supply a TV commercial produced at their own cost and risk outside of this agreement. The advertiser also accepts and agrees that this action would not reduce the value or cost of their membership. Any cost of changes required to the TV commercial throughout the advertiser's agreement will be borne by the advertiser outside of this agreement.

20. Each advertiser accepts that their ranking and position within KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd's search engine will be equal to those within their category (Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, etc) other than they will be ranked based on the search engine criteria of optimisation within their level (Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze).

21. Any delivery claims made by the advertiser or discount vouchers published within the print or online media of KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd and any action as a result of the public or otherwise is the sole responsibility of the advertiser. Any claims resulting from this via KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be met by the advertiser.

22. a. All credit accounts due for payment shall be notified to the Advertiser by the 30th day following the date of the invoice, time to be of the essence. All sums due to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd or RBS Factoring shall be paid in full, and the Advertiser shall have no right of set off in any circumstances.

23. b. In the event that payment is not received by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd or RBS Factoring by the due date, the media owner shall be entitled to suspend all further advertising until payment is received and/or repudiate the contract and make any surcharges for breaking the contract.

24. c. In the event that payment is not received by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd by the due date, the media owner reserves the right to charge interest on all overdue balances calculated on a daily basis at the rate of two per cent above the minimum lending rate of National Westminster Bank Plc from time to time in force.

25. d. Notwithstanding anything in these terms and conditions or implied to the contrary, in the event of the Advertiser ceasing to use the services of KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd (for whatever reason), the whole amount of monies due from the Advertiser to the date of cessation shall fall due for immediate payment.

26. e. The Advertiser will be liable for all costs incurred by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in the recovery of debts not paid by the due date.

27. f. Payment may be made by cheque, credit transfer, direct debit, cash and any major credit card.

28. Any discount which KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd may have agreed with the Advertiser shall be forfeited in the event of failure by the Advertiser to complete the contract or to meet the above credit terms.

29. Advertising Agency commission will be allowed to those advertisers recognised by the Newspaper Society, but shall not exceed ten per cent and will be subject to the terms of that recognition. This commission will not be allowed if the Advertising Agency fails to meet the terms.

30. All private advertisements and certain categories as laid down by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be prepaid.

31. The Advertiser agrees to indemnify KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in respect of all costs, damages or other expenses falling upon the media owners or any of the companies within the KOS Media Group as the result of legal action or threatened legal action or threatened legal arising from the publication of any advertisement or advertising promotion.

32. An order for an advertisement shall amount to acceptance of these terms and conditions, and any condition placed on an order by an Advertiser shall be null and void in so far as it conflicts with them.

33. Copyright in advertisements produced wholly or partially by the media owners belong to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd. Advertisers may not reproduce such advertisements without the media owner's written consent.

All terms and conditions stated above are in place to protect the advertiser, the media owner and the communities they serve within the public domain as well as the beneficial rights of individuals and organisations. KOS Media will endeavour to always act reasonably in applying its terms and conditions.

Effective from June 2008

Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR

Tel 01303 817040 Fax 01303 817004

Email: info@kosmedia.co.uk

Tenterden & District Age Concern Day Care Centre

Age Concern Day Centre Manager – We are looking to recruit an enthusiastic and experienced person to manage the day to day running and organisation of the Day Centre, which provides a variety of day care services for older people.

NVQ 3 in Care or equivalent qualification essential.

Previous experience of working with older people preferred.

Working hours – 35 hours per week

Annual leave 20 days plus statutory Bank Holidays.

Starting salary not less than £18,000.00 pa, depending on experience and qualifications.

Secretary/administrative support – We also require a flexible and adaptable person to work on a part-time basis offering secretarial and administrative support to the Age Concern Day Centre Manager and staff.

An ability to work with older people an advantage.

Working hours – 9.00 to 12.30pm Monday to Friday

Salary £8.00 per hour

Annual leave 20 days plus statutory Bank Holidays.

For details contact Nicky Tredway 01580 762882.

Tenterden & District Day Centre, Church Road, Tenterden. TN30 6AT

Closing date April 17th 2009

All appointments subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Fuji Seal Europe Ltd.

The Fuji Seal Group is the only shrink sleeve manufacturer offering a complete single source solution utilising its network of manufacturing operations in the UK, Netherlands, France, Poland, USA, Asia and Japan.

We are recruiting the following positions:

PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Duties will include providing the sales team with administration support as well as liaising directly with customers and other internal departments to ensure projects run smoothly and delivery dates are met. Effective communication is key as well as good organisation skills.

GENERAL DUTIES PRINT (DAYS)

Duties will include making of Doctor Blades for printing presses, operation of automated cleaning of ink buckets, maintaining equipment and housekeeping. Full training will be provided.

You'll enjoy a full range of employee benefits.

To apply please send your CV to HR Department, Fuji Seal Europe Ltd, Scimitar Close, Gillingham Business Park, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0RJ or alternatively you can email to jobs@uk.fujiseal.com.

Closing date: 6 April 2009

STRICTLY NO AGENCIES PLEASE

Fuji Seal Europe are an equal opportunities employer.

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Hourly Paid Lecturers in Beauty Therapy Ref: SE001

Salary: £20.37 - £28.92 per hour

The College is currently looking to recruit dynamic and enthusiastic Lecturers in the Beauty Department to deliver high quality training and assessment procedures to full and part time learners. The applicants must have a relevant vocational/academic qualification and have or be willing to work towards a teaching qualification. Recent industry experience would be advantageous.

Hourly Paid Lecturers in Hair Design Ref: SE002

Salary: £20.37 - £28.92 per hour

We are looking to recruit passionate individuals to teach assess and contribute to the development of Hair Design programmes. The applicants must have a relevant vocational/academic qualification and should hold or be willing to work towards a teaching qualification. Recent industry experience would be advantageous.

Closing date: Friday 17 April 2009

Mid-Kent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

Dover District Carers' Support

PROJECT WORKER

37.5 hrs per week (part-time may be considered for the right applicant)

Salary (NJC Scale 4): £17,574

One year fixed term (possibility to extend subject to longer-term funding)

The organisation provides support, advice and information to people over the age of 18 who care (unpaid) for a relative or friend. We are funded, in part, by Social Services and have contact with many other public and private sector bodies.

For this post we are looking for a sensitive, confident, versatile and articulate person who will champion the role of Carers. They will provide support and information on the phone or to Carers calling in at our newly opened Carers' Centre. This busy and demanding role will also include liaising with our many contacts to provide a quality service, as well as being involved in new projects. The work will be both office-based and involve regular travel to meetings and projects outside the office.

A full driving licence and your own transport are essential for this role.

For an application pack, please write to:

Tricia Cole, Manager, DDCS, 10 Victoria Road, Deal, Kent CT14 7AP

For further information email: sue@carers-doverdistrict.org Closing date: Friday 24 April 2009

Please note this is NOT a Careworker post.

Registered Charity No. 1097782

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following area:

Personal Tutor Ref: P0316

(Full-time, Part-time and Fixed Term)

Salary: £20,368 - £26,255 per annum/pro rata

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The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

EDF ENERGY NETWORKS (SPN) PLC SECTION 37 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT 1989 REGULATION 5 OF THE ELECTRICITY (APPLICATIONS FOR CONSENTS) REGULATIONS 1990

NOTICE OF AN APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO REPAIR/REPLACE THE EXISTING 132kV OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINE TOWER (ROUTE REFERENCE PF) IN THE AREA OF HIGH WEALED AONB KENT (TOWERS PF50 – PF 35 TQ917254, TQ937291)

IN PURSUANCE OF THE ABOVE REGULATIONS, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT EDF Energy Networks (SPN) Plc, Registered Office 40 Grosvenor Place, Victoria, London SW1X 7EN has submitted to the Secretary of State at the Department for Energy and Climate Change an application for her consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed planning permission pursuant to Section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to install and keep installed a 132kV (132,000 volts) lattice steel pylon overhead line.

The proposed refurbishment to this existing overhead line is required to maintain the existing supply of 132kV to Hastings Grid Substation and Ruckinge Grid Substation.

A full set of the application documentation, including a location plan have been deposited for public inspection at the following location:-

Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL

Planning Applications, Kent County Council, 1st Floor, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ

Tenterden Library, Tenterden Gateway, 2 Manor Row, High Row, Tenterden, TN30 6HP

The application documentation will be available for inspection at the above locations until 10th May 2009, without payment of any fee, during the normal business hours of the offices at these locations.

Any objections and/or representations in respect of the application must be made in writing and addressed to The Secretary of State, Department for Energy and Climate Change, Onshore Electricity Development Consents, V2120, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET on or before 10th May 2009 and should state the grounds on which they are made, and is asked to send a copy to me.

Any such objections or representations will be copied to the relevant planning authority and the applicant unless the person making them requests in writing that they should not be so copied. If there is such a request then the relevant planning authority and the applicant will only be informed that an objection has been made but no details will be forwarded to them.

Date 8th April 2009.

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Reminding the over 40s of their skills

A NEW programme to help the over-40s facing the dole or already unemployed is being piloted in the county.

Called Shape Your Future, it's a free workshop taking place over two and a half days to allow people to explore self-employment as an option for the future.

Business Link's Sharon Massingham, who designed the programme, said: "Facing redundancy is frightening, particularly in the current climate, especially for those who are more mature and fear they might not find work again."

"It is important to recognise that it was the job that was lost, not you. You have the same skills, knowledge and experience you had before you were made redundant."

"It may be you are passionate about a hobby or interest that could be a potential business opportunity. Why not come along and find out if it is a possibility?"

Dates are April 27 and April 29 at Lordswood; and tomorrow (Thursday), May 19 and May 21 at Chatham.

Further workshops, including one aimed specifically at executives and professionals, will take place in Medway during May and June.

The programme is funded by the South East England Development Agency. Details on 01732 878586.

Forum says demand more from suppliers

ANYONE running a business knows that one or two suppliers and the odd client can be pains in the nether regions, but the Forum of Private Business says dealing with them has become one of the biggest headaches.

The forum, which represents many businesses in Kent, is urging small firms to save money by creating more efficient dealings with suppliers.

A survey by research and consulting agency YouGov found that 42 per cent of the owners of small businesses who responded were most anxious about dealing with difficult suppliers and clients. The same proportion said that their greatest concern was the fear of technology not working properly.

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Julie Maddocks asks: "Is small really beautiful in business?" Search 'crunch'

Trish's top tips could make the difference

■ BY TONY PATEY

TRAINING and development have shot to the forefront of business agendas as bosses realise that looking after their staff can help fight tough trading conditions.

With redundancies taking their toll, employers want to boost the morale and motivation of those still in work and training for the future is a key way of doing that.

Trish Fraser, managing director of Quality South East, the Investors in People centre for Kent, said: "Although it is generally accepted that staff development pays for itself in the long run, most companies are thinking about the short term at the moment."

"Making the case for investing in staff development has become more difficult in the past year as many organisations are focusing on efficiency and cost-cutting."

"However, those companies that look after their staff are much more likely to survive the recession."

Her top tips to help companies think about how they can develop their staff cost-effectively are:

- Prioritise training needs. Instead of cutting the budget on all training, think about what is essential for the organisation's development and which is desirable.
- Training does not have to be conducted by a specialist provider. People within an organisation that have received training are often very well equipped to deliver it and share best practice, which is also an empowering experience for employees.
- Development does not just mean training. Think about employees' roles and how their skills can be broadened through learning on the job.
- Allow employees flexible hours to pursue their own interests or to volunteer. Both can



PEOPLE MATTER: Trish Fraser, of Quality South East, says training and development of staff remains crucial

lead to ongoing development, as well as helping staff to feel appreciated, without a cost to the employer.

• Following major reorganisations, many people are being asked to cover new and expanded roles, but it is important that employees do not feel new responsibilities are being forced on them. Helping staff to feel motivated to test themselves will maintain productivity.

• Managers must help employees get to grips with new situations and challenges they are facing. Low morale and a lack of skills will ultimately impact the bottom line in so many

ways both the long and short term.

- Look at subsidised courses. Government grants are available and it is worth investigating the help that is out there.
- Online courses, whether bought in or developed in-house, can be very cost-effective. Employees can work at a time to suit them and do not have to spend days out of the office.
- Good communication is essential; encourage staff to talk to each other and share ideas. It may be that an employee has discovered an ingenious way of overcoming a problem that his or her colleagues are struggling with.



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RUGBY

Blistering Ashford give Erith a roasting



ON FORM: Ashford's impressive try scoring proved too much for Erith

Ashford 47 Erith 9

A CLINICAL attacking display swept Erith aside as Ashford produced one of their performances of the season.

Ashford blasted out of the starting blocks and maintained their momentum for the full 80 minutes, leaving the Erith side wondering what had hit them for large parts of the game.

Within four minutes of the kick-off, Ashford opened the scoring with a well-placed kick by Ali Vant chased down and received by winger Chris Baker who scored an unconverted try.

Ashford continued their bright start with further tries from Joe Lakin and Peter Walsh in the first half.

The second half followed the same pattern as the first with Ashford in the ascendency. Lakin and Walsh scored their second tries of the afternoon and Owen Piper and JJ Murray sealed the victory with tries in the dying minutes.

Skipper John Norman will hope his side can continue their form in their last league game of the season, this Saturday against fourth-placed Old Olavians.

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Mark Stimson discusses what he feels has been turning point of the season



Picture: AIRWAVES YAMAHA

NEW DAWN: Leon Camier (above, right) is hoping his new machine (pictured) will be on the pace for the first round of the British Superbike Championship at Brands Hatch

A Brands new start for superbikes ace Camier

LEON Camier believes the change to Yamaha could hamper his British Superbike Championship challenge as the series begins at Brands Hatch this weekend.

The 22-year-old Ashford-born rider showed his potential by finishing sixth overall in the standings last year, picking up three race wins, including his maiden victory at Snetterton. His impressive display earned him a new contract with the GSE team for 2009.

However, this season will bring a new challenge for Camier as he will have to get to grips with a new bike in the shape of a Yamaha, compared to last season's all-conquering Ducati.

MOTORSPORT

■ BY TOM HOWARD

Camier admitted it has been a difficult pre-season and will be going into this weekend's meeting blind having been denied any test mileage on the new Yamaha bike.

He said: "It is very difficult to say how it is all going to go as we have not ridden the bike yet. Pre-season has not gone well and our test on the bike was cancelled. We are going to be rocking up at Brands without ever riding the bike."

"If I was riding the Ducati bike of last year I would agree that I would be considered as one

of the favourites, but I am not sure how the new bike will go.

"I would say we would not expect to be competitive until halfway through the season. We are certainly not aiming for race wins at the moment. I could be completely wrong though, the bike could turn up and be very quick so it is difficult to say. It would be phenomenal if we came away with a win."

The team have agreed a deal to use data from the Yamaha World Superbike team, who are running a similar bike, but Camier believes it may not bridge the gap to the front runners.

He said: "We are meant to be using the data but to be honest I do not think it will apply much to our bike, but we will have to wait and see."



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Timely win breathes life into Town's play-off hopes

FOOTBALL

BY TOM HOWARD

Ashford Town 2

Jones 15, Browne 30

Worthing 0

TWO first half strikes earned Ashford Town their first league win for a month and injected life into their fading Ryman South play-off bid.

With Ashford's play-off chances diminishing after a difficult March that saw them go without a league win, the three points were welcomed with open arms by Ashford manager Steve Lovell.

After a quiet first ten minutes the game burst into life, as Worthing were gifted a glorious chance to open the scoring.

The Ashford defence were slow to react to a long ball and Ross Treleaven waltzed though on goal, but dragged his shot wide of the post.

However, just two minutes later Ashford took the lead as they capitalised on a mistake by Worthing goalkeeper Glen Mansfield. The goalkeeper misjudged the flight of a long ball which flew over his head and to the feet of Paul Jones, who had the easiest of finishes.



ON TRACK: Paul Jones (pictured) scored Ashford's first goal to set them on the way to their first win in a month

The goal gave the home side confidence and they started to carve up Worthing with slick passing moves.

On the half hour Ashford found the net again from a well worked move. Danny Brathwaite floated a perfect cross in the area and Tony Browne climbed well to nod into the top corner.

Ashford looked comfortable and in control for the remainder of the half and in truth Lovell's side should have been further in front at the half-time whistle.

Ashford Town starting XI



Subs used: Glyde (Muguo 45), Smith (E Brathwaite 84)

The second half proved to be much more of a battle as Worthing tried to get themselves back in the game.

On 51 minutes they should have pulled a goal back as the lively Treleaven broke through the Ashford defence, but once again he fired his shot wide of Seb Barton's goal.

Chances were few and far between as the majority of the half was played in the middle of the pitch. Ashford did come close to scoring a third on the hour, but Wilkins' bullet headed from six yards whistled past the post.

Lovell was delighted to secure a win, but believes it is unlikely his side, who are eight points adrift of the play-offs, will secure promotion to the Ryman Premier this year.

He said: "The game was won really in the first half as we took two of our chances. In the second half they had a go but we never looked in any danger.

"It's a shame we have had a few blips in the last few games, but all we can do now is just keep winning."

FOOTBALL



STAYING: Steve Lovell will be Ashford boss next season

Chief insists Lovell will remain boss at the Homelands

ASHFORD Town chairman Don Crosbie has confirmed the club is not going into administration and manager Steve Lovell will be in charge next season.

Town looked to be heading for an uncertain future following an online statement by Crosbie last month indicating he was on the verge of calling in the administrators after falling out with co-owner Tony Betteridge.

After Saturday's win against Worthing, Crosbie claimed the club's future is safe and that he aims to buy Betteridge out.

He said: "There is no way I am going to allow the club to fold and we want to take this club to a very high level. The most important thing is this club is going nowhere but upwards. It is not going into receivership and it's not going into liquidation if I can help it. It's a great club and we have got some excellent people around us."

Uncertainty

The chairman was delighted to confirm Lovell will be in charge of the football club next season after two weeks of uncertainty. Crosbie has been pleased with Lovell's performance since he joined Ashford from Sittingbourne last season and feels he is the man to move the club forward.

He said: "If Steve Lovell is not at this club then I won't be here. He is here for the duration because he's a great manager.

"Everyone has to remember we have not had this team together long and we have got some very good youngsters coming through.

"We need to capitalise on this season. We are getting better and better after a shaky start. I think we will be great force next year."

Crosbie rubbished rumours that players have not been paid for up to a month and insists the squad are happy at Homelands.

He added: "I have been paying the players up until I made my statement, but felt it was unfair I was left to pay for everything.

"The players understood the situation but they are being paid, they're happy and they are a great bunch."

LEAGUE TABLE

(Not including midweek games)

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Kingstonian	37	22	7	8	+36	73
2 Cray Wanderers	38	22	7	9	+30	73
3 Fleet Town	38	19	14	5	+37	71
4 Metropolitan Police	38	18	13	7	+23	67
5 Worthing	38	18	13	7	+23	67
6 Sittingbourne	38	17	12	9	+9	63
7 Merstham	38	17	9	12	+5	60
8 Ashford Town	38	15	14	9	+17	59
9 Godalming Town	38	16	9	13	+20	57
10 Eastbourne Town	37	16	6	15	+3	54
11 Dulwich Hamlet	38	14	14	10	+13	53
12 Croydon Athletic	38	13	13	12	+6	52
13 Folkestone Invicta	38	14	10	14	+5	52
14 Walton & Hersham	38	13	9	16	-7	48
15 Leatherhead	38	12	7	19	-19	43
16 Whitstable Town	38	12	6	20	-21	42
17 Walton Casuals	38	11	8	19	-10	41
18 Corinthian-Casuals	38	10	10	18	-25	40
19 Whyteleafe	38	10	9	19	-14	39
20 Burgess Hill Town	38	8	13	17	-19	37
21 Chipstead	38	8	11	19	-34	35
22 Crowborough	38	3	4	31	-78	13

FIXTURES (Saturday): Ryman Division One South - Ashford Town v Corinthian Casuals

Cavaliers' attitude helps guide them to cup victory

SUNDAY LEAGUE

ASHFORD Cavaliers Reserves edged out Bliby Reserves in a five-goal thriller to secure the Division Four Cup at Hythe Town's Reachfields Stadium.

Matthew Gomez gave Ashford Cavaliers the lead through a free-kick on the edge of the area. Within five minutes Gomez struck again with a screamer to make it 2-0 at half-time.

Bliby fought hard in the second half and pulled a goal back through Steve Airey. Minutes later they equalised with a stunning 16-yard drive from Dan Docherty. Both sides went in search of a winning goal and in the dying moments Cavaliers' Doug Robson found the net to secure the cup.

Extra-time was needed to decide the outcome of two quarter-finals in the Sheber Trophy.

Burton Grove and Brabourne were locked together at 2-2 after 90 minutes, but Grove found another gear in extra-time and scored three times to wrap up a 5-2 victory.

A pulsating tie between Shadoxhurst and Brewmaster Reserves entered extra-time with the score at 4-4.

Neither side could find a winner so the game was decided by a penalty shoot-out. Brewmaster held their nerve and won the shoot-out 4-2.

Lydd proved to be the surprise package in the Ashford Charity Trophy as they thrashed higher league opposition in the form of Bethersden 5-0. A brace from Joe Tibble and



CUP GLORY: Ashford Cavaliers (left) secured the Division Four Cup in a five-goal thriller

goals from Andy Bennett, Wayne Beaney and Martin Button secured Lydd's place in the final of the competition.

In the Premier Division, Market Hotel continued their stint at the top of the league with a 3-2 win against Bromley Green.

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